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GREEK STATESMEN

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LIVES

OF

GREEK STATESMEN

SOLON—THEMISTOKLES

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BY THE

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PREFACE

THE history of a people is often best studied in the lives of individual citizens; and this is perhaps to a larger extent the case in the ancient Greek world than elsewhere. A Greek nation, in one sense of the word, there never was; but some individual Greek citizens proposed to themselves and acted on a policy which, if consistently carried out, might have had for its results the growth of a vigorous national life. Apart from this there is the personal interest which gathers round the career of great men, and which should lead us to examine most carefully the grounds of the judgements passed upon them.

These reasons have led me to hope that the cause of historical truth may be promoted by a series of lives of Greek statesmen from the dawn of contemporary history to the last days of the Achaian League. In a certain sense, it is true, all free citizens in such a city as Athens were statesmen; but even at Athens there were always some who rose to pre-eminence among their fellows, and the influence exercised by Perikles has been described by Thucydides as virtually the rule or sway of one single man. It is also true that the distinction now commonly drawn between military and civil life, between the statesmanship of legislative assemblies and the tactics of commanders in war, had no existence for the countrymen of Themistokles or Timoleon. The man who had most influence in debate might be also the most successful leader in the battle-field, or, as in the case of Kleon, he might not; but there was nothing to prevent him from appearing in the character of an orator or in that of a general, and he might be called upon at any time to lay aside the former for the latter. But in spite of this the rise and growth of a very definite ideal of statesmanship may be traced in the lives of the most prominent citizens in Athens, Sparta, or elsewhere: and in these lives we may perhaps best appreciate

the political education afforded in the Greek cities to the great body of the people.

In many cases also we have to do justice, so far as may be in our power, to men who have not generally been fairly dealt with, or to determine the character of measures which have not been fully understood. The Seisachtheia of Solon may be mentioned as an instance of the latter. As illustrating the former part of our task, the charges of corruption and treachery brought against Themistokles must compel us, if they are not fully proved, to reverse the verdict usually given on a general review of his career. It is not likely that I may have again to speak of this illustrious man, with whom even such historians as Thirlwall and Grote have failed to deal fairly. I have therefore felt it my duty to examine the whole evidence afresh with the utmost care. The result seems to me to involve the complete vindication of his good name; and I venture to hope that it may be accepted as the only judgement in accordance with all the facts of the case.

The lives given in this first volume may be regarded as presenting a picture of the whole Greek world down to the triumphant close of the great struggle with Persia. The second volume will deal with the statesmen whose lives belong for the most part to the period of the fatal struggle between Athens and Sparta.

In the spelling of Greek names I have followed the English form, wherever such forms can be said to exist, as with Athens, Thebes, Corinth, Thrace, Egean. Where the Latin forms are more familiar than the Greek, I have given both, as in Korkyra (Corcyra), Kroisos (Crœsus). In a few cases I have taken the modern form, as with Egina for Ægina or Aigina. Otherwise I have adhered to the old Greek forms as transliterated by the great majority of our Greek historians and scholars for many years past. It should be remembered, however, that the Greek spelling involves practically no difference of sound from that of the Latin pronunciation, the sound of the C and K being identical, and the diphthong *ai* being pronounced as we pronounce *ai* in *fail*, and *ei* and *oi* like *ee* in *been*.

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LIVES

OF

GREEK STATESMEN

SOLON

Character of the evidence for the life of Solon

Solon, the great Athenian lawgiver, whose form stands out with marked vividness against the mists which enwrap the earlier history of Athens, was born about a century and a half before the battle of Marathon; and even at the time of the battle of Marathon the written literature of the Greeks was almost in its earliest infancy. There would therefore be nothing to surprise us if his figure appeared as shadowy as that of Drakon (Draco), whose legislation is ascribed to the period of Solon's childhood; and we are thus driven to ask whether the light thrown on his character and his work by the evidence at our command is altogether to be trusted. If we looked only to the confidence with which writers and orators, living many centuries later, spoke of him, we should conclude that they were dealing with matters admitting of little uncertainty or doubt. But on further examination we find that they do not agree among themselves, that some of the descriptions given of his measures are altogether contradictory, and that many changes and not a few institutions are ascribed to him with which it is manifestly impossible that he can have had anything to do. We find also that the

assurance of later writers increases with the distance which separates them from his lifetime. How far his work may have been noticed by logographers or annalists earlier than Herodotos, we cannot say. In the pages of Herodotos he comes before us chiefly as a philosopher holding sombre views of human life. His legislation he dismisses with a passing reference: of his career as a general he takes no notice at all.

But the shortcomings of Herodotos and of others who have written about him are in some measure compensated by Solon himself. Solon was not merely a busy man of the world, a general, and a statesman: he was also, as we might be disposed to phrase it, a man of letters, if we may apply the term to one who adopted certain forms of expression rendered necessary by the absence of writing. It is true that a prose literature, of no inconsiderable bulk, may be handed down by oral tradition alone. The Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindus, have been written and printed. But to this day they are retained by an effort of memory by thousands who have never seen them in a written or printed form; and they have been so retained under the threat of a great woe to those who should dare to commit them to parchment or to paper. But the vehicle of verse is obviously an immense help to the retentive powers of the human mind; and among the early Greeks especially it became the means for preserving the collective wisdom of the people. The language lent itself readily to the two or three different rhythms or metres which were employed to express feelings and impulses of extremely different kinds. The hexameter has been supposed by some to be the natural embodiment of the most vehement enthusiasm, while the iambus has been regarded as not less suited naturally for the utterance of biting sarcasm or the keenest resentment. But the hexameter, which moves with so much rapidity in the Iliad, adapts itself with equal ease to the more sluggish thought of the didactic philosophy which bears the name of Hesiod; and the iambic verse was in like manner employed to

Solon as a poet

express the saddest and gentlest as well as the fiercest emotions of the human heart.

Character of Solon's poems

With Solon the measures which he used (whether Elegiac or Iambic) became simply the natural and the most easy vehicles for the expression of his thought, whatever it be. His selection was not determined by any desire to win renown as a poet; and it never occurred to him to think that a metrical form implied the possession of a vivid and brilliant imagination. At times, as when he wished to renew the war for the conquest of Salamis, Solon could impart to his verse a character of stirring energy. But for the most part his poems are unadorned utterances of thoughts and wishes which he sought to put plainly before his countrymen; and of these poems all that have come down to us are a few disjointed fragments. Such as they are, they enable us to form of his career, and of the most important political changes effected by him, a judgment more correct than any which we could ever have reached from the remarks of writers who from whatever point of view have concerned themselves with his history.

Existing fragments of his poems

Thus, living in an age for which we have no consecutive contemporary records, Solon presents to us a figure altogether more distinct and real than that of others in earlier Athenian and Spartan tradition, whose names are to us scarcely less familiar than his own. The light thrown upon it comes wholly from himself, and we may well regret that Plutarch, who seems to have had before him all of Solon's poems, has preserved to us only some brief fragments when, without over-burdening his manuscript, he might virtually have left us the whole.

Parentage of Solon

By birth Solon belonged to one of the Eupatrid or noble tribes which wielded at this time the whole power of the state and exercised a direct religious ownership over almost all the soil. His father, Exekestides, claimed descent from Kodros (Codrus), the last hereditary Athenian sovereign, whose devotion to his country had, in the eyes of his people, rendered the kingly office too sacred to

be handed on to any mortal successor. His mother was a cousin of the mother of Peisistratos, the future tyrant whose usurpation cast a dark shadow over Solon's last days and led directly to the great enterprise of the Persian king Dareios and his son Xerxes against the liberties of Europe.

He was born, we have said, about a century and a half before the battle of Marathon; but the date of his birth, which is ascribed to the year 638 B.C., cannot be fixed with certainty. It was, we cannot doubt, altogether to his benefit that he could not hope to inherit great wealth. Either by prodigality or, as some expressed it, by his generosity his father had much impaired his substance; and it became necessary for his son to betake himself to some profitable occupation. Solon chose that of a trader to foreign countries. Fragments of his poems show that he had no contempt for riches or for the advantages and pleasures which flow from wealth; but they also show that his choice was determined by worthier motives than the mere desire for money. In his old age he spoke of his past life as of one continued effort to gain a wide knowledge and experience of men and things; and although his earlier poems betray an over-keen love of enjoyment, his life's work is evidence that his youth and early manhood were marked by at least as much thought for others as for himself.

Circumstances of his early life

His travels and voyages as a trader necessarily spread his reputation far beyond the bounds of his own country. His ability as a poet was of itself enough to win for him no inconsiderable fame: but his exaltation to a place among the Seven Sages of Hellas belongs to a time subsequent probably to his death. The fact that his name appears in all the lists of the Seven attests the veneration felt for him throughout the Greek world; and, indeed, it is his name which gives some substantial reality to a shifting and shadowy company, known under many names in many lands. Seven niches were always ready to receive seven men who might rise to preeminent greatness for wisdom or for beauty in any country; but these niches are the seven

Solon as one of the Seven Sages of Greece

Cont. 1

stars of the constellation of the Great Bear, called by the ancient Hindus the seven Arkshas, or shiners, who by a slight change of the word became the Seven Rishis, or sages, the companions of Manu, the Hindu Noah, in the ark, and who reappear in the seven sons of Rhodos and Helios (Rhodes and the Sun), the seven chiefs banded against Thebes, the seven sleepers of Ephesus, and the seven champions of Christendom.

War between Athens and Megara for Salamis

For Solon the period of early manhood had passed away long before any opportunity for conferring marked benefit on his country presented itself to him. The narrow limits within which the drama of Greek life was commonly played out are especially impressed on us, when we remember that this opportunity was furnished by the long struggle carried on by the Athenians with the town of Megara for the possession of the little island of Salamis. This island lies, we might almost say, barely more than a stone's throw from the entrance to the Athenian harbour of Peiraieus. For six years, we are told, Megara resisted the power of Athens with so much resolution and success that the defeated Athenians passed a law threatening the penalty of death on all who might dare to call for a renewal of the war. Nor is this all. If we are to believe the story, told by Thucydides, of the confederation of the Attic Demoi or cantons under Theseus, Athens was now able to avail herself of the military aid of all those cantons against the unsupported strength of a single city. But in spite of this the fortunes of this Megarian war seem to carry us back to an earlier state of things, when, as in the legend related by Herodotos, the Athenian Tellos won for himself an undying fame by falling in a fight with the men of Eleusis, a town distant only twelve miles from Athens. It is impossible with such difficulties as these not to feel the uncertainty of the materials with which we are dealing, even when the statements made are both plausible and likely.

The discouragement of his countrymen aroused in Solon a feeling only of impatience and indignation. There was

nothing in the position of Megara or in the character of her citizens to show that the real issue of the quarrel had been reached, and he resolved to run the risk of defying the recent law. The story goes that he carefully spread reports of his own madness, and that, when the people were sufficiently convinced of their truth, he rushed into the Agora, and there, taking his stand on the stone whence the public herald or crier announced tidings of importance to the city, burst out into a torrent of words thrown into the form of elegiac verse. He told them that he had come from the island which they did well to covet, charged with the task of convincing his countrymen of their fatal folly in abandoning it to such folk as the men of Megara. He would rather, he said, become a citizen of the barren and worthless rock of Pholegandros, than keep the name of a citizen of Athens, so long as Athens lay under the shame of surrendering Salamis to enemies altogether unworthy of her. The poem which expressed his vehement convictions was a hundred lines in length: of these only eight have been preserved to us. But the fragment assures us of the spirit which pervaded the lost portion: and thus we have contemporary evidence of the greatest weight for the motives of one of the chief actors in the opening drama of conquest which in the end made Athens an imperial city.

Renewal of the war with Megara by Solon

The Athenians, stirred by the exhortations of Solon, resolved to renew the war; and their determination to intrust the command of it to Solon himself was influenced, we are told, chiefly by the future despot Peisistratos. This is scarcely likely, as Peisistratos was at this time a mere boy: but there are strong reasons for thinking that the chronology of Herodotos is for this period mistaken, and that he greatly contracted the interval which separated the Megarian war from the usurpation of Peisistratos.

Chronology of the war with Megara

That Solon commanded the expedition, there can be no doubt; but if we may give credit to the tradition, his generalship was in the main confined to stratagem. In answer to his

prayer for advice the Delphian oracle bade him propitiate the heroes of the island; and Solon landed by night to offer sacrifice to them secretly on the sea shore. Attracted by the promise that, if victorious, they should receive grants of lands in Salamis, five hundred Athenians were disembarked on a promontory, while Solon watched for an opportunity of taking the Megarian occupants by surprise. He had not waited long before a Megarian vessel approached, to watch the movements of the Athenian volunteers. This ship Solon succeeded in seizing, and manning it with an Athenian crew, he sailed straight to the city, while the Megarians were busied in repelling the Athenian invaders by land. Not knowing that the vessel was now in other hands, the Megarian garrison admitted the ship without suspicion, and the city was at once taken.

Stratagems ascribed to Solon

The conquest of Salamis was thus virtually achieved; but the Megarians, who had been suffered to quit the island, were not prepared to abandon their claim without further effort. The result was another war, in which both sides suffered severely. At length the Megarians consented to submit to the arbitration of Sparta. The evidence adduced on both sides for the right of possession referred either to the actions of mythical heroes or to local customs. Each contended that the mode of burial practised by the ancient inhabitants of the island was peculiar to themselves; but the Athenians maintained that their own rights rested on the cession of Salamis to Athens by the two sons of the great Salaminian hero Aias (Ajax) the son of Telamon. Their claim was admitted, and Salamis remained an Athenian possession down to the times of Macedonian supremacy. The fact that Solon receiving a grant of land became a Salaminian may have given rise to the tradition of his birth in the town of Salamis.

Reference of the quarrel to Spartan arbitration

In the legendary history of his age Solon next appears as a mover in what is called a Sacred War. From whatever causes, Pytho or Delphoi (practically the two places are the same) had become one of the centres of the common religious

life in which alone a Greek nation can be said to have existed at all. The Greek life was strictly interpolitical, not national. In theory each Polis or city was an independent unit, with all the powers of a sovereign state within its puny area. But although the several portions of the Greek race had no common political existence, they had a common religion.

Solon and the Sacred War

The primitive hearth and altar in every house had been from the first the sacred spot where the members of the family might meet on all occasions of festival; and as it was with the family so it was with the phratries or clans, and with the aggregates of clans in the bodies known as Phylai or tribes. The common feasts of the houses, the clans, and the tribes were marked by games, which led to contests for prizes in every branch of Greek culture. From this simple origin grew up those splendid gatherings which made the names of Pytho and Olympia, of Nemea and the Isthmus, famous throughout the whole Greek world. But from first to last the feeling of union thus fostered was religious and religious only; and the societies, called into being by the needs of these great festivals, professed to act as religious, not as political, bodies.

The religious association of houses, clans, and tribes

Here, as the wealth of the cities which sent these pilgrims to these sanctuaries increased, there grew up temples which became constantly more and more magnificent; and for the preservation of these structures as well as for the general regulation of the festivals some of the Greek tribes, professing each to come from a common stock, formed themselves into societies called Amphiktyoniai, a word denoting the nearness of their abode to the common shrine.

Amphiktyonic councils

Of the many societies thus formed a few rose to some prominence; but the one which so surpassed the rest that it became known preeminently as the Amphiktyonia, was the union of cities whose representatives met at Delphoi in the spring and at Thermopylai in the autumn. This great council was charged directly with the care of all things relating to the interests of

The Delphian Amphiktyonia

the Delphian temple; and this task might involve in the last resort the duty of making war on those who refused to make amends for injuries done to those interests. But it was plain that unless this alliance rested on a thorough national union (and for Greeks such union was impossible), its action would be far more mischievous than beneficial. It might become a mere instrument in the hands of the predominant cities of the league; or, if these were so opposed as to preclude all thought of common action, its powers might be (as indeed for the most part they were) left wholly in abeyance.

Of the matters which directly concerned the interests of the Delphian Sanctuary the safety and comfort of the pilgrims journeying to and from the festivals would be among the most important; and it was on this point that the first serious quarrel arose which, chiefly, we are told, through the influence of Solon, was forced on to the arbitrament of arms. So far as we can weave the popular traditions into a connected narrative, it would seem that within a few miles of the Sanctuary, on the northern side of the Corinthian gulf, there was a port under mount Kirphis, and an island city on the mouth of the river Pleistos, the city and port being both known as Krisa, or the former as Kirrha and the latter as Krisa. As time went on, the seaport rose in importance and wealth, while the men of Krisa were deprived of the guardianship of the temple by the Delphians, who had also left them behind in the race for riches. Availing themselves of their position, the people of the harbour exacted heavy tolls from the pilgrims, and were guilty of worse wrongdoing.

Interests of pilgrims journeying to the Delphian Sanctuary

It was at this juncture that Solon, as the story goes, urged the Amphiktyonic council to interfere. Roused by his zeal, they declared war against the people of the port; and in the enforcement of their ban the Athenians were supported not only by the Sikyonians under Kleisthenes, but by the Thessalians as well as the neighbouring Phokian tribes. In spite of all the efforts of this great confederacy, the men of

Sentence passed on Kirrha after the end of the Sacred War

Kirrha prolonged their resistance for ten years. At the end of this time their power was exhausted; and after vain efforts to hold out awhile longer on the heights of Kirphis, they saw their town destroyed or left to serve merely as a landing place. By a decree of the council their territory was consecrated to the Delphian god: in other words, it became the property of the citizens of Delphoi, who thus became masters of a seaboard. The land so handed over to the Delphian or Pythian god was never to be touched again by a plough, but to serve as a pasturage for cattle, an arrangement not inconvenient for those who were anxious chiefly to provide an abundant supply of victims for the temple offerings.

Uncertain character of the evidence for the Sacred War

The only fact which at the utmost we can gather from this story, is the gradual aggrandisement of the Delphians at the expense of their neighbours on the sea coast. But for all the incidents of the narrative we are altogether without any adequate evidence. We cannot suppose that the inhabitants of one solitary and insignificant town would have resisted for ten years the combined forces of Athenians, Sikyonians, Thessalians, and Phokians. But these ten years are the ten years of the Trojan war, or of the return of the heroes from Troy; nor is there anything very astonishing, after all, in the circumstance that after the war we hear of Delphians rather than Krisaians as connected with the shrine of Apollon, since in the so-called Homeric hymn to that god there is but the faintest shade of difference between Krisa and Delphoi.

Here too, as in the struggle for the acquisition of Salamis, the issue is said to have been determined by a trick or stratagem of Solon. In this case the method adopted by him is little to his credit. He is said to have caused the death of thousands of the enemy by poisoning the waters of the river Pleistos. The story comes to us from Pausanias, a writer who lived eight centuries after the Athenian lawgiver; but we need not lay stress on this fact in order to vindicate Solon's fame. Pausanias accepts the geography of these

Alleged poisoning of the waters of the Pleistos by Solon

places indicated in the Hymn to Apollon: Strabo rejects it. Nay, we are told that there were two sacred wars, and thus we are left at a loss to know to which of the two wars any given incident may belong. By the orator Æschines the Kirrhaians are associated with the Akragallidai, as tribes beyond measure impious; but we hear of the Akragallidai nowhere else, and we are thus none the wiser for the comparison. In short, we are dealing with the traditions of a war which may have taken place, but of which, if it ever did take place, we cannot now be said to have any knowledge whatever.

Condition of the Athenian people in the time of Solon

From these traditions, which present Solon to us chiefly in the character of a cunning trickster aiming at results of doubtful value, we are carried to others in which we find ourselves to a certain extent on firmer ground, because we again have over some portions of it the guidance of Solon himself. That he was profoundly impressed by the evils which were hindering the growth of the Athenian people, there is no question; and it is, at the least, possible that he may have been nerved to his efforts as a reformer by the history or the legends of the legislation of an earlier Athenian lawgiver.

The legislation of Drakon (Draco)

The name of Drakon (Draco) is associated generally with the idea of severity carried to a point which admits of no excess. He insisted, we are told, that the least offences deserved death, and that he could devise no greater punishment for the worst; but this saying is inconsistent with such descriptions as we have of his legislation, if indeed we can speak of a Drakonian legislation, when Aristotle asserts that he made no change in the constitution. Some, accordingly, have supposed that Drakon was simply one of the Thesmothetai, or notaries, employed to reduce to writing ordinances already in force. But over Drakon himself there rests an impenetrable mist. We know nothing whatever of his life, and his name bears a suspicious likeness to that of other legislators for whom no one ventures to claim a historical character. The Hindu Manu differs from the Cretan Minos only in some incidents of a career which is

altogether mythical. As the Spartan Lykourgos is strictly the light-bringer who scatters the darkness of license and disorder, so in the true meaning of the word Drakon is the keen-sighted being, who sees and promotes the true interests of his people. He is thus identical with the Lokrian Zaleukos, who may, or may not, belong to a somewhat later age. His name, therefore, thrusts him back into the class of strictly mythical personages, like Heosphoros, or like Asterodia, who journeys across the heaven with her attendant stars.

Character of the Drakonian legislation

But if we turn to the accounts given of the Drakonian laws, we find that, so far as they changed anything at all, they were movements manifestly in the direction of greater laxity and mercy. Down to the time (whatever this may have been) of the Drakonian reforms, the ancient religious powers of the fathers of the family and subsequently of the kings were exercised by the council of the Areiopagos, or Hill of Ares (Mars). This council is said to have been first constituted under Solon: but the statement refers chiefly to the name, and proves only that thus far it had had no distinctive title, but was known preeminently as The Council (Boulê). The powers of this assembly rested strictly on a religious basis, and were exercised with an impartial and inflexible severity.

Jurisdiction of the Council of Areiopagos

Among the crimes which were accounted as offences against the gods and so came under the jurisdiction of the Council, was homicide; but it was not competent for the court to draw distinctions between the guilt of one act of homicide and that of another. The one penalty of death must be passed upon all who were found guilty of having shed blood, whether the accused might plead accident as a ground for acquittal, or urge provocation as a palliation of his offence. The distinctions demanded by the principles of equity were drawn, we are told, by Drakon, when he ordained that the new court of the Ephetai, consisting of fifty-one members, should sit in different places to adjudicate in different cases of homicide. If the criminal

alleged accident, he was to be tried at the spot known as the Palladion; if he pleaded provocation, he was to appear at the Delphinion or consecrated ground of Apollon and Artemis.

Conspiracy of Kylon, circ. 620 B.C.

A time of great depression, if not of general misery, for the Athenian people is indicated by the traditions of plague and pestilence which followed the breach of faith shown by the Alkmaionid tribe towards Kylon and his followers after their unsuccessful attempt to seize the Akropolis and, as it was said, to set up a tyranny (? B.C. 620). Following the advice of the Delphian oracle, the Athenians invited Epimenides from Crete to undertake the task of purification, which was duly accomplished by the performance of certain strange and mysterious rites.

Epimenides the Cretan

There is no need to question the reality of this fact or the existence of Epimenides himself; but we cannot advance further. The name of Epimenides is found in some, as that of Solon is seen in all, of the lists of the Seven Sages; but Epimenides is known chiefly for his wonderful sleep of fifty-seven years, and he thus takes his place in the great company of sleepers, which numbers in its ranks many historical personages, such as Charles the Great, Sebastian of Portugal, and Boabdil of Granada, with others who seem to belong chiefly to the Cloud-land, like Olger the Dane, the British Arthur, the Tells of Rütli, Tannhäuser, and Thomas of Ercildoune.

Intestine divisions in Athens

Whatever may have been the results produced by the rites of Epimenides, they seem to have had no effect on the fortunes of the inhabitants of Athens generally. The time was one of those in which the evils of an old order of things come to be felt more and more as intolerable burdens; and it was to the removal or the lessening of burdens admitted to be well-nigh past bearing that Solon now resolutely applied himself. The Drakonian changes had modified the administration of the law of homicide; they had not touched the intestine disorders of the country. Obviously, the only points of real importance in the

question are the causes and the nature of these dissensions; and it is on these points that we most feel the inadequacy of our information.

But here, also, we have happily the words of Solon himself to help us. They have come down to us, it is true, only in fragments. But they profess to describe the state of things which he found at the beginning of his work, and the changes which he had effected on its completion; and the questions which we have to answer turn on the meaning of the terms which he employs. We might be tempted to think that the most natural meaning would be nearest to the meaning of Solon himself: but we have to remember that many of his terms were in familiar use many centuries later among writers and speakers who necessarily attached to them a very different meaning and who did not hesitate to transfer to the times of Solon financial and social problems which were in many instances the product only of their own. From the words of Solon we learn two facts, which he states with the utmost clearness. The one is that the men who exercised power in the state were guilty of gross injustice and of violent robberies among themselves: the second is, that of the poor many were in chains and had been sold away even into foreign slavery. It is on this latter fact and on the evils implied in it and bound up with it that Solon lays most stress. He declares with vehement earnestness that the state of things so brought about must eat away and destroy the life of a state, and that he had applied to it the only practicable remedies. Addressing the Black Earth (Gê Melaina), in a personal appeal, he speaks indignantly of the earth itself as having been in some way enslaved and as having been now by himself set free by the removal of boundary marks which had been fixed in many places. He had thus got rid of what seemed to him one crying wrong; and he had lessened its disastrous consequences by releasing from captivity and restoring to their ancient homes many who had been sold into foreign slavery, as well as by raising to the condition of freemen those who

Description of the state of Athens by Solon himself

had on Attic soil been reduced to slavery and trembled before their despots.

Meaning of the terms used by Solon

The whole debate turns, beyond doubt, on the meaning of the several terms found in these fragments. It is possible that the remainder of the text, if it had been preserved, might have given their true meaning with a precision not to be questioned; but it is not surprising that in the course of ages opinions more or less inconsistent and contradictory should have sprung up about them, and that these opinions should in varying measure have been adopted by modern historians. The differences in the views of recent writers depend much on the weight which they assign to the authority of Plutarch.

Supposed condition of the peasantry of Attica

By those who regard his representations as in the main trustworthy it has been urged that the system which tended to reduce English freemen to villenage before or after the Norman Conquest was in the days of Solon converting the Attic peasants into slaves. If they failed to pay their rent or to furnish the quota of produce which stood in the place of rent, the deficiency was reckoned as a debt for which they were allowed by law to pledge their own bodies on the bodies of their sisters or their children. The real prosperity of the country was much hindered, we are told, by the fact that the smaller tenures were heavily mortgaged; but this, it is urged, was as nothing compared with a practice which had for its end the establishment and extension of a servile class by the offer of loans which the lender knew would never be repaid in money and for which he sought no other security than the bodies of the borrowers. In such a state of things a legislator who had the welfare of the people at heart could see only a plague to be suppressed at all hazards. The choice lay between two evils. On the one side the debts incurred by the tenants or producers, whether these be called Thêtes or by any other name, were legitimate debts, to the recovery of which the lenders were intitled; and on the other side the avoidance of all injustice or hardship to the latter

would involve in the long run the destruction of the whole people.

The spread of discontent had alarmed the Eupatrid or ruling class; and when Solon was in his year of archonship, 594 B.C., invested with something like dictatorial authority, he used it, not like the luckless Kylon of an earlier (p. 13) or the successful Peisistratos of a later day, to make himself a despot, but to bring the mischief summarily to an end by introducing his celebrated measure known as the Seisachtheia, or removal of burdens, a measure which, it is said, annulled all mortgages on lands in Attica, restored to freedom all debtors who had been reduced to slavery, provided the means for recovering and ransoming such as had been sold to foreign masters, and rendered a fresh repetition of the old evils impossible by prohibiting all security for loans on the bodies of the borrower or of his kinsfolk. The losses of the lenders, who may themselves have been indebted to others, were, we are finally told, in some measure lessened or compensated by a depreciation of the currency; and the justification of all these stringent and perhaps arbitrary provisions was furnished by their complete success. The public credit was not shaken, and the need was never again felt of debasing the money standard or of repudiating a debt.

Archonship of Solon: the Seisachtheia, ? 594 B.C.

But a careful consideration of the matter will show that the picture thus drawn is, to say the least, open to criticism. It implies the existence in Solon's day of the practice of mortgaging land, and the existence also of a class, if not of two classes, of money-lenders distinct from the owners of the soil. The question is thus complicated with difficulties for which there seems to be no adequate solution. To Roman history it is useless to look with any hope of receiving light on these obscure and perplexing subjects. Pictures of social misery fully as great as that of the poor in the days of Solon may be found in Roman traditions down to the time of the Decemviral legislation; but the causes and extent of the financial embarrass-

Questions of debt and mortgage

ments of the Roman Plebs, or Commons, have baffled the researches of modern inquirers.

When, however, the distress of the Athenian agriculturists is definitely ascribed to debts secured by mortgage, the objection at once suggests itself that the security of mortgage in modern usage can be given only by the owner of the soil, and that the distressed men of Attica were not the owners of land, but only cultivators. The testimony of Plutarch can have no value except in so far as it gives faithfully the traditions which he had received: and these traditions in their turn can have weight only in so far as they really represent the state of things with which Solon had to deal. Later writers would be under an almost invincible temptation to introduce into their narrative the ideas of later ages; and these ideas might be so mingled up with older matter that of two consecutive sentences one might be true and the other altogether false.

Opinion of later writers

It is certain, however, that Plutarch regarded the distress in Solon's day as caused chiefly by the conditions of land tenure imposed on the cultivators. These peasants, or Thetes, as they were called, were known also as Hektemorioi, from the fact that they paid to the owner, or, as some have thought, retained for themselves, one sixth portion of the produce of the soil. The latter condition would, we might suppose, make it impossible for the cultivator to subsist at all: but the doubt betrays the scantiness of the knowledge which we have of these Hektemorians. All that is clear is that they were not regarded by Plutarch as proprietors. We cannot say for certain that he was speaking of the same class when he mentions those who pledged their persons for the repayment of debts, or that he took the Daneistai, or money-lenders or usurers, to be landlords and landlords only. But when we look more closely to the facts of the early social history of Athens, as far as they are known to us at all, we find ourselves driven to ascertain, if it be possible, whether the more modern idea of mortgage

Land tenure in the days of Solon

was then known, and whether there existed at that time a class of professed money-lenders.

Landowners and money-lenders

But if the lenders were landowners lending money to their own tenants, we can only wonder at the superfluity of the loan, when, according to the story, the failure of the tenant to yield the stipulated portion of the produce involved in itself the forfeiture of his freedom. If on the other hand we suppose that the landowners and the money-lenders were not the same persons, can we for a moment doubt that the Hektemorians would never have been allowed by the landowners to pledge their persons, the value of which might far exceed the amount of their debt, to professed usurers? Such a course would tend directly to defraud the landlord, who would have a paramount claim on the bodies of the tenants if they failed to pay their produce. We may, if we please, assume that there were two classes of men indebted to two classes of creditors, the Thetes or Hektemorians who were pledged to their own landlords, and the free proprietors of small estates who were pledged to professed usurers: but if we do so, we shall be multiplying gratuitous hypotheses, which it will be difficult to reconcile with the views whether of Plutarch or of anyone else.

Removal of boundary marks by Solon

But Solon tells us plainly that he removed certain boundary pillars from the land. What then were these landmarks? We have no evidence which in the least justifies the supposition that they were mortgage pillars inscribed with the name of the lender and the amount of the loan, nor have we any reason for asserting that they exhibited any inscription at all. Why then should we maintain that they were anything more than, or anything different from, what Solon says that they were? He speaks simply of landmarks or boundaries (Horoi): and we know that not merely in Attica or in Latium, but throughout the Aryan world, or even beyond its limits, the land was marked off by boundary stones, to break or remove which was nothing less than sacrilege.

These stones were the marks of absolute and exclusive possession by the father of the family. Each household at the first had had its special boundary god, this god being doubtless the reputed founder of the house; and it was only through the lapse of ages that these special boundary gods gave place to a common deity which guarded the limits of the whole community. In this later stage the Roman Terminus, we are told, was a power too mighty to be assailed even by the Capitoline Jupiter; but all that this myth proves to us is the fact that the notion of which Terminus was an embodiment was far older than the religion of which Jupiter, the Greek Zeus Patêr, the common father or lord, was the necessary expression.

Gods of boundaries

In every Aryan society we have thus at starting a number of families each standing wholly by itself, and only accidentally connected with each other, worshipping each its own deity and marking off the domain of that deity by inviolable boundaries, while it owned no obedience to any law which could extend its protection to aliens. It is quite clear that such are not the conditions or the materials which the state, as an aggregate of houses, clans, and tribes, would ever have chosen for the accomplishment of its work. But, unsuitable though they might be, they must be rough hewn to serve the wider purposes of the state; and the history of the Greek and Latin tribes preeminently is the history of efforts to do away with distinctions on which their prôgenitors had insisted as indispensable.

The primitive Aryan family

We have no warrant, therefore, for supposing that the boundary marks spoken of by Solon were anything but the landmarks of this primitive condition of society. They represented, we cannot doubt, those ancient patriarchal rights which received their whole sanction from religion. This stage in the growth of the human mind finds its expression in such laws as those which are attributed to the Corinthian Pheidon and which forbid any change whatever in the number of families or properties. In Attica, then, as elsewhere, the Eupatrids, or lords of the

Meaning of the change effected by Solon

free households, were still the owners of almost all the land; and these heads of families might in the strictest sense be termed despots, whose trembling dependents might be suffered to draw their livelihood from the soil on condition of paying to the owner a certain portion of the produce. It is more than likely that even this fixed payment marks a step forward in the condition of the labourer, who had started without even this poor semblance of right, for a mere semblance it was after all. If he could comply with the terms imposed on him, he was nominally free; but his real state was in no way changed. The lord needed not to restrict himself to the sixth portion of the produce; and a bad season might leave the peasant unable to pay even this sixth part. In either case, he fell back into the servile state from which he had never been legally set free.

Alleged inslavement of the land

While things continued thus Solon could say with perfect truth that the land itself was inslaved. We have no warrant for asserting the existence at this time of any class of small proprietors; but if such a class existed, they would be powerless against the Eupatrid landowners, and would be liable to the same accidents which might at any moment make the client once more a slave.

The condition of the Hektemorians

If this be at all a true picture of the condition of Attica in the days of Solon, things, it is clear, could not go on indefinitely as they were. The condition of the Hektemorian was probably a stage far in advance of that from which he had started; but it was certain that the man who had risen thus far would never rest content without guarantees of law even for the slender rights which he had acquired. He could not consent to remain at the mercy and caprice of a despot who might on the occurrence of any accident, as for instance that of a bad season, sell him into foreign slavery. Under such circumstances, the cultivator of the soil might become a free owner, or he might fall back into his original servitude. Hence then Solon had abundant materials for the measures of relief which he

contemplated: and the course which he took seems to have been precisely that which is apparently indicated by his words. From all lands occupied by cultivators on condition of paying a portion of the produce to the owner he removed the pillars which marked the religious ownership of the Eupatridai. At the same time he lightened the burdens of the cultivators by lessening the amount of produce or of money which henceforth took the shape of a rent. By these measures, a body of free labourers was not so much relieved of a heavy pressure as for the first time called into being.

Alleged debasement of the currency by Solon

Beyond this, there is nothing in the words of Solon himself which would lead to the conclusion that he debased the coinage; and beyond the mere assertion of this debasement there is little agreement between ancient and modern writers. While some have contended that Solon altered the weights and measures as well as debased the coinage, others have held that his work did not go beyond the latter change. But, in truth, when we go beyond the language of the lawgiver himself, we plunge into a sea of conjectures. The conjectures may be more or less ingenious; and some credit for ingenuity must be allowed to the hypothesis of Androtion that while Solon lowered the rate of interest and depreciated the currency about twenty-seven per cent. he left the letter of the contracts untouched. According to this supposition one hundred drachmas in the new currency contained the same amount of silver with seventy-three drachmas of the old standard, and thus a hundred drachmas of the old standard would extinguish a debt of a hundred and thirty-eight drachmas according to the new.

Later ideas of the Seisachtheia of Solon

The fact that Solon conferred a permanent financial benefit on the cultivators of the soil is beyond question. This he tells us himself; but of the details of the measure we have no positive knowledge, and the idea that he lowered the currency may be the growth of a much later age. It is not merely likely, but in some instances it is certain, that in these accounts of the

relations of debtors with creditors at the time of the Seisachtheia the more modern writers transferred to the Athens of Solon notions belonging to a later time, and having but the faintest comprehension of the tremendous power exercised by the ancient lords of the soil in their religious ownership, concluded that the relief which Solon gave was chiefly through the abolition or the lessening of debts. What Solon speaks of is rather a struggle between slavery and freedom; and the tradition that it was never again found necessary to modify contracts or to debase the currency is probably nothing more than a later mode of asserting that his work, whatever it may have been, was done effectually.

Theory of interest on loans

It is scarcely necessary to say that, if this interpretation of the Seisachtheia, warranted and indeed inforced as it is by the words of Solon himself, be correct, that measure is removed from all direct connexion with the questions of loans and usury in ancient or modern times. The whole usage of borrowing and lending must rest on the supposition that the transaction is advantageous on both sides. Except on this supposition it is impossible to justify the demand of interest for money lent; and as no man is bound to lend his money for nothing, the prohibition to receive interest becomes a virtual prohibition of all borrowing and lending. Amongst ourselves the usage of loans is found to be of benefit on both sides, and the taking of usury to an amount representing this benefit is regarded as perfectly justifiable and right. In the days of Plato and even of Cicero this was not so distinctly seen; and to them therefore the taking of money seemed either a matter of doubtful morality or an act utterly immoral. The objection was likely to be felt more strongly by thinkers than by those who had practical experience of the working of the system: and accordingly it was urged by philosophers long after the popular feeling on the subject had died away.

To Solon, however, as he carried out his reforms for the benefit of the peasants, it became clear that there remained before him a task not less important, which he had not yet

touched. He had, in his own words, emancipated the soil, or a large portion of it; but he had not disturbed the principle of religious association on which the ancient tribes based their right, nor had he any wish to disturb it now. Such a course might have brought with it dangers which even Solon could not venture to face. But if a reform in this direction was impracticable, it became the more necessary to devise some other means for welding together into one mass the discordant elements of Athenian society, as he found it in his own time. The greater part of the population of Attica was not included in any tribe. In other words, it was absolutely excluded from all share in the work of government. It could hope for no advancement: it was debarred from acquiring any privileges. If therefore there was to be any political union of the Eupatrids with the class which had struggled into freedom beyond the sacred limits of their order, it must be brought about by a classification which should have nothing to do with affinities of blood, and therefore nothing to do with religion.

New classifications of the citizens

Such a classification could be based only on property; and the principle they introduced was termed the timocratic. By this system eligibility to public offices in the state was made to depend on the possession of a certain income measured according to the value of corn. The first class consisted of men whose annual income was equal to 500 medimnoi, about 700 imperial bushels, of corn; the second of those who had from 300 to 500 medimnoi, and who as being rich enough to serve as horsemen were known as Hippeis or Knights; the third of those who possessed from 200 to 300, and who, as owning a team of oxen, were called Zeugitai. All these classes paid a graduated income tax, called Eisphora, on a capital rated at twelve times the annual income for members of the first class, at ten times for those of the second, and at five times for those of the third. All citizens whose incomes fell short of 200 drachmas or medimnoi were placed in a fourth class,

Timocratic constitution of Solon

which, as including and not as consisting only of the Thetes or Hektemorians relieved by Solon, was known as the Thetic.

This class, which was free from all direct taxation, was necessarily the largest in the state. They could not be called on to discharge the costly and unpaid public services known as Leitourgiai, or liturgies, and in war they served only as light-armed infantry, or in armour provided for them by the state. At the same time, they were declared ineligible to all public offices. The archonship and all military commands were now open only to members of the first class: but certain minor offices might be held by those of the second and third classes, who were required respectively to serve at their own expense as horsemen and as heavy-armed infantry.

The fourth class of citizens

The practical results of this constitution were secured solely by a restriction of privilege. For the filling of public offices those citizens who were not members of tribes remained just as they had been before. But those members of tribes who had not the income of the first class could no longer be archons or take the command of armies in the field. From their own point of view these poorer Eupatrids, or tribesmen, were now excluded from offices and honours which they regarded as their rightful and inalienable inheritance. The spell of the ancient despotism of religion and blood was thus broken; and a further democratic element was introduced by the law, which left the election of the archons to the general council of the whole body of citizens known as the Heliaia, in which not merely the members of the first three classes but, as the Eupatrids styled them, the rabble of the fourth class had their place.

The Eupatrids and the Thetes

The same law went even further, for it made the archons directly responsible to the public assembly and liable to impeachment by it, in case of misbehaviour, at the end of their term of office. The power of this public assembly was still further strengthened by the institution, which is also ascribed to Solon, of a second council, called the Probouleutic Council of the Four

The Archons and the Probouleutic Council

Hundred, as being charged chiefly with the preparation of matters to be brought before the general assembly and with the summoning and management of its meetings. The members of this Council of Four Hundred were to be elected by the whole people from members of the first class of citizens.

These restrictions on Eupatrid privilege widely extended the area of political power. The great majority of citizens were still ineligible for office; but in the election of the chief magistrates their vote could check or neutralise that of the haughtiest of the tribesmen, and even the archons dared not to set too little store by an authority to which they were amenable, and a tribunal before which they must appear. On the whole, the changes of Solon involved a decided step towards the growth of the commonalty: but the progress made was very slow, and perhaps on this account more sure. The Eupatrids still retained substantial power. During their year of office the Archons, who must be tribesmen and therefore Eupatrids, were still absolute judges from whom there was no appeal; and the council of Areiopagos was strengthened by a censorial jurisdiction extended to the punishment of vice as distinguished from crime.

Slow growth of the commonalty

Like the Archons, the members of this council must be tribesmen, and the same rule applied to the Prohouleutic Council of Four Hundred, that is of one hundred for each of the four tribes. Hence, even if they belonged to the first class, or Pentakosiomedimnoi, the non-tribal citizens stood politically on a level not higher than that of the fourth or Thetic class. They contributed in larger measure to the public revenue; and unless account be taken of the insignificant offices which they might fill, this was all. No one who did not possess the religious title could hold the great offices: and thus Solon left the constitution, as he found it, practically oligarchic. His reforms appeased for a while the popular discontent; but the time which preceded the usurpation of Peisistratos was clearly one of great

Influence of the ancient tribes

agitation, of a kind which showed that the archons were little able to check the wealthy nobles and their adherents, although they might be strong enough to keep down the poorer citizens.

The Dikasteria

In times long subsequent to those of Solon the people exercised their supreme power through the judicial courts known as the Dikasteria; but the members of these courts worked on a system of fixed payment, of which in these earlier days we hear nothing; and therefore we need have no hesitation in saying that the establishment of these courts is not among the works which can with any reason be attributed to Solon. Still more, if they could be so ascribed, we should be unable to explain the strenuous opposition made to all democratic reforms during the whole period between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars.

Special laws ascribed to Solon

To Solon, apart from the legislation involved in accomplishing the chief task of his life, are referred a large number of laws, of a character so miscellaneous that this circumstance alone might lead us to question the accuracy of the tradition. Among these one of the most prominent is the law prohibiting the exportation of all produce from Athenian territory except olive oil. This law would seem designed to attract to Athens as much as possible the labour of skilled artisans, by encouraging manufactures rather than agriculture on a soil naturally thin and poor. Regarded in this light, the law is noteworthy as showing not merely a sound appreciation of the best interests of such a country as Attica, but a marked opposition to the prevailing sentiment of the Hellenic world, which branded the sedentary life of the artisan as beneath the dignity of the free citizen. At Sparta, and perhaps not at Sparta only, this sentiment, placing a stigma on agriculture itself, which to Cicero appeared the highest and the most honourable of callings, reserved its approval for laborious military idleness. To this feeling the current of opinion at Athens becomes, as time goes on, more and more steadily opposed, until from the lips of Perikles we have the emphatic statement that no man needed to feel

ashamed in confessing the fact of his poverty, the real disgrace lying in the absence of strenuous efforts to escape from it.

Another law, for which the authority of Solon is with great likelihood claimed, invokes disgrace on those citizens who in time of sedition should hold aloof from all share in the contest. It is, in fact, rather a curse than a law, and it seems to be in complete antagonism with the oath by which, after the subsequent reforms of Kleisthenes, each citizen bound himself to support the existing democracy against all who might attempt to overthrow it. This apparent opposition is, however, sufficiently explained, if we note the difference of circumstances in the two periods. In the time of Solon the uninterrupted maintenance of public order was, in the infancy of constitutional growth, a much more important matter than adherence to a particular form of polity. He had himself introduced a modified oligarchy. In place of this the choice lay between an irresponsible despotism and anarchy, and the need of cutting the time of mere confusion as short as possible made it in Solon's belief the duty of every citizen to throw his sword into the scale on one side or the other. The consciousness that the imprecation of Solon might determine the action of a large number of the citizens would be a strong discouragement to the man who might aim at making himself a tyrant.

Solonian law against neutrality in times of sedition

The great work of Solon was now done. According to the popular tradition his career closed, as it began, with a series of wanderings in foreign lands. In his earlier days he had travelled as a trader. He went now, we are told, chiefly because he could devise no better means for insuring the continuance of the social and political order of which he had been the founder. The fact that he had been enabled to make certain changes was in itself no surety that others might not undo them, or that he might not be induced to undo them himself. He therefore bound the Athenians, we are told, by solemn oaths that for ten years they would suffer no change to be made in his laws, and then, to make it

Travels of Solon

impossible that any changes should come from himself, he departed on his long pilgrimage. That at some time or other he visited Egypt and Cyprus his own words tell us: but they do not enable us to fix the time. He can scarcely have gone to Egypt while Amasis was king, for the reign of Amasis began at least a generation after the legislation of Solon; nor have we any more adequate reasons for thinking that he was at Sardeis during the reign of Kroisos (Crœsus). The fall of the Lydian monarchy belongs to a time later by half a century than the legislation of Solon; and it is certain that in the belief of Herodotos his visit to the Lydian court took place only six or seven years before the great catastrophe.

Legend of the visit of Solon to Kroisos (Crœsus)

The story, as told by Herodotos, forms one of the most beautiful didactic legends of the ancient world; and it can be fitly told only in his own way. The great desire of the Lydian king was to obtain from the great Athenian lawgiver and philosopher an attestation to his own surpassing wealth and happiness; and this attestation he thought that he should best attain by asking him if he had ever known a man whom he could call happy in all things. Solon said that he had, and named the Athenian Tellos. Turning sharply on him, Crœsus asked his reason for naming this man; and Solon answered, 'Because Tellos lived when things went well with the city, and his own children were good and fair, and he saw these children springing up and prospering steadily; and also because after such a life he died gloriously, for there was a battle between the men of Athens and the men of Eleusis, and he came to the aid of the Athenians, and having put the enemy to flight died nobly, and the people buried him on the ground where he fell and honoured him greatly.'

Thinking that in any case he must rank next to Tellos, Crœsus put the question, and Solon named Kleobis and Biton,

Tale of Kleobis and Biton

adding that these men lived in Argos, rich in goods and strong in body. 'It chanced,' he said, 'that there was a feast held in honour of Hêrê, but the oxen were not at hand to take their mother to the temple.

So they placed her in the chariot, and drew it thither over forty and five furlongs; and the people at the feast marvelled at their strength and held their mother happy that she had such children. Then she stood up before the shrine of Hêrê, and prayed the goddess to give to her children the happiest thing which mortal man may have. So the young men lay down there in the temple, for they were weary, and fell asleep and died; and thus Hêrê showed that death is better than life, and that there can be no better gift for man than to die happily.'

Vexed and angered by this second disappointment, Crœsus expressed his indignation that Solon had not thought him equal even to men of low estate. Solon's answer was ready. 'Dost thou ask me, who know that the gods are full of jealousy, about the happiness of man? In a long life there is much to be seen and suffered from which man would willingly turn aside; and in his threescore and ten years there is not one single day which brings not with it some change or turn of things, so that man in all his life on earth has no sure abiding. And now, O king, thou art rich and wealthy, and all things thus far have prospered to thy hands; but happy I may not call thee until I learn that thy life has been happily ended, for the rich man is not wealthier than he who has only whereby he may live, unless he keeps all his wealth till the hour of his death. Many a rich man is very wretched, and many in humble estate have good fortune. So, then, in the case of all we must wait till they die, for the sum of human happiness is when a man is fair in person and sound in wind and limb, when no sickness vexes him and no evil chance annoys him, and when his children grow up fair and strong; but all these things together never fall to the lot of any one man, and he who has had most of them and goes down to the grave yet having them best deserves the name of happy. But everywhere we must look to the end, for the stateliest tree is often torn up by the roots while yet it stands forth in the fulness of its beauty.'

Ethical philosophy of Solon

So having spoken, Solon departed, leaving Crœsus sorely wroth, because he had thought so little of his wealth, his treasures, and his pomp. But the dark shadow soon fell on his house; and when his son Atys, the brave and fair, was smitten unwittingly by the spear of the Phrygian Adrastos, and when his dream of happiness was thus broken and ended, Crœsus called to mind the words of the Athenian sage, and confessed in bitter anguish that they were true. Once again, when, after the fall of Sardeis, Crœsus stood on the funeral pile which, we are told, was to consume him along with the other victims chosen by the Persian conqueror to share his fate, the memory of his past happiness and the overwhelming sense of the misery which had followed it called from him the cry, thrice repeated, 'Solon, Solon, Solon.' The explanation of this cry, given at the request of the Persian king, drew from Cyrus an order that Crœsus should be taken from the pyre. But his command came too late. The flames were curling round the wood, and Crœsus could only invoke the aid of Apollon, who sent a fierce rain which put out the fire before it could touch him. The Lydian king in his turn lived to be the friend and counsellor of his conqueror, reading him lessons not unlike those which he had learnt from the great Athenian lawgiver.

The fall of Crœsus

With this beautiful story we are concerned only in so far as it belongs to the career of Solon, and we have seen that chronologically it cannot be made to fit in with the time of his legislation. It is well to see, further, that in all its details the drama of the life of Crœsus belongs to the region of cloudland. From beginning to end the story is made to justify the religious philosophy of the age; and this didactic purpose, not less than the materials of the tale, strips it of all historical character. The candid but artless remark of Herodotos that until Crœsus was actually taken no one had paid the least attention to the plain warning that the fifth sovereign of his dynasty should atone for the iniquity of the founder, proves at the least that the prediction grew up after the catastrophe, even if it proves no more; and

Didactic purpose of the story

the fabrication of one prophecy brings the rest under the same suspicion.

Before Solon returned to Athens, the political tide was running in a different direction. In place of tribes we hear now of what are called factions, bearing severally the titles of Pediaioi, Paraloi, and Hyperakrioi, and denoting the men of the plains, of the sea coast, and of the hills. As to the nature of this division we cannot speak positively. The names, as connected with stories of the intestine disputes preceding and following the Solonian legislation, may be nothing more than mere titles of factions. But some whose judgment should carry weight have discovered in them a triple division answering to the Ramnes, Titienses, and Luceres of the Romans. If it be so, it must be admitted that the correspondence exists along with points of difference almost irreconcilable.

Factions at Athens

If we follow the tradition adopted by Herodotos, these parties or factions in the later years of Solon had each its own separate head. The Pediaians, or, as we may perhaps call them, the Eupatrid landowners of the plain, were ranged under Lykourgos. The Paralians, or men of the coast, had sided with the Alkmaionid Megakles. The men of the hills were gathered under the banner of Peisistratos, who, according to an unlikely tradition already noticed, had been mainly instrumental in obtaining for Solon the command in the renewed struggle with the Megarians for Salamis.

Peisistratos and the men of the hills

In the strife now impending Solon, it is said, foresaw that Peisistratos must be the conqueror. But his efforts to stir up the Athenians to a resolute combination against the tyranny with which they were threatened proved ineffectual. His curse or imprecation (p. 27) remained a dead letter. But he bravely discharged his duty to the end. Standing in his armour at the door of his house, he replied, we are told, to those who asked on what he relied to save himself from the vengeance of his enemies, 'On my old age.' With all the force of his

Resistance of Solon to the usurpation of Peisistratos

eloquence he protested against the granting of any guard to Peisistratos; and if his advice had been followed, the usurpation in all likelihood would never have been achieved. The guard was granted, and the Akropolis was seized. But Peisistratos, as the story goes, did Solon no harm; and the man who had done more than any who had gone before him to make his country free, died in peace (? 558 B.C.), full of years, with a fame incomparably the more pure because he had to face and to struggle with the temptations involved in the possession of virtually absolute power, with which he had been intrusted in his year of archonship (? 594 B.C.) His opportunities at that time for making himself master of the state were greater than any which fell to the lot even of Peisistratos. But we have no reason for supposing that he wavered for an instant in his rejection of them. He sought no reward; but he obtained one in a reputation not altogether unlike that of the English Alfred the Great.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

PEISISTRATOS

AN examination of the earliest conditions of Aryan society can leave us in no doubt that the theory of kingship in any shape was a secondary and a comparatively late growth. At the outset we have the isolated family, for which the most vivid image is that of the beast with its mate and its cubs in its den. over which the lord of the den reigns supreme. The difference between the brute and the human habitation lay not so much in the absolute power exercised by the master, as in the idea of an existence continued after death, an idea which could be possessed only by the human family. For the latter the master or founder remained the living god, with whom they were united in a strictly religious bond. In his activity they were active, and his strength could and must be supported by the same nourishment which preserved their own. Hence with him they feasted in their annual sacrifices; and his representative became also the priest, in whose ministrations none except those who were sprung from the same stock could have part.

Exclusiveness of the primitive Aryan family

A hundred such families might start independently and with fair equality in the race and struggle for existence: but it was by no means likely that all would maintain the position with which they started. It was at any time open to the most powerful among them to combine for the purpose of putting down the rest; and this conquest would be really the establishment of an oligarchy, the members of which were, theoretically at least, on a level. Their object would be, necessarily, the strengthening of their

Primitive oligarchy

order rather than the securing of predominance for any one at the expense of the rest.

But this further object might in course of time present itself to any one of them as an end to be aimed at: and if the enterprise succeeded, such an one would become a king, and he would become so precisely and only because he represented the common stock from which all over whom he ruled were by actual kinship sprung. Nay, more, he would, we cannot doubt, describe himself as intitled to the rights of royalty because he represented the common ancestor more strictly and thoroughly than anyone else could pretend to do; and so he became king, not as an alien conqueror (for this would be, practically, a contradiction in terms), but because the other masters of families at whose expense he had risen agreed to waive to him the exercise of some of the rights which all claimed as sovereign chiefs over their individual families.

Origin of kingship

We are thus prepared for the course which events would follow on the decay of this kingship, which had itself been a comparatively late development, at least in Hellas. The process would, in fact, practically reverse the order of things which had led to its growth and establishment. The royal authority had risen at the expense of a number of chiefs, all of course Eupatrids or nobles, and all also in theory Gamoroi, or owners of land, which they held by a strictly religious title. But the natural growth of population would increase the number of younger sons with their families, who would not be owners of lands, but who would nevertheless be called Gamoroi. In other words, a great patrician order would be thus formed, and it would continue to exist under a dynasty of kings as it had existed before, only with some of its powers shorn and some of its rights in abeyance.

The patrician order

It is clear that the strength of the kings must depend on that of the order from which they had sprung. If this order was jealous of its privileges, and if each house had preserved substantially its own independence and its authority

over its own subjects, the elements of a peaceable revolution were always ready to be called into activity, and the kingship might pass away, as it might also have sprung up, almost without a struggle. The abolition of royalty would in fact be simply a return to the earliest form of government. The great chiefs would resume their full rights, of which they had conceded or been compelled to yield a portion to the king; and the whole machinery of oligarchical government would again be set in motion.

Decay and abolition of kingship

This we find, from such traditions as have come down to us, to have been the general course of political developement in the Greek cities. In some instances the change is accompanied by a certain amount of convulsion and violence: in others, as at Athens, where the kings, it would seem, had been guiltless of much active wrong, it was accomplished with perfect harmony. The self-devotion of Kodros, the last Athenian king, if it be a fact, justified the assertion that the office of king was too sacred to be filled by any mortal man; and the friendly spirit in which the change was made was shown by electing for his life the heir of the last king as the chief magistrate, or archon, of his city. The change might appear slight: but in fact it was vast. The man who would have been king was now a magistrate and nothing more. Again, the term of office might be shortened, as we are told that after the death of the first archon it was shortened first to ten years and then to one; and beyond this, he was responsible for the exercise of his power to those who elected him.

Archons for life, as substitutes for hereditary kings

But we should be reckoning without the evidence if we were to suppose that oligarchies thus peacefully set up had before them a tranquil future, resting on the firm administration of constitutional law. There were in almost every case sunken rocks and reefs on which these exclusive and imperious societies were sure to make shipwreck. The Eupatrid order remained stationary in its numbers, or increased slowly, or even became less numerous, while beyond the charmed circle there lay a great

History of the new oligarchies

multitude to which a variety of causes were constantly bringing fresh strength. It is true that the land-owning nobles denied that they owed any duties to this mass of men whom they regarded as aliens in blood and therefore in religion; and it is also true that for these the change from kingship to oligarchy had brought no benefit whatever. But just in these two facts lay the real dangers which threatened the existence of the oligarchic governments.

These close and exclusive bodies are necessarily liable in an extreme degree to the plagues of jealousy and dissension, and divergence of interest is sure to create a minority which, if it cannot gain its own ends, may yet hamper the movements of others. For the members of this minority the temptation to subvert the existing state of things by means of the unfranchised multitude would be a strong one. Nor can we perhaps say with fairness that the alliance was on their side always selfish and dishonourable. Men act commonly on curiously complicated motives; and it is quite possible that a Eupatrid courting the favour of the people might to some extent be acting conscientiously. He might have a purely selfish motive in promising them justice; but he might also be honestly convinced of his being able to apply remedies for some of the wrongs from which they were suffering.

Effects of jealousy and dissension

In many cases an ambitious and discontented member of the ruling class might thus succeed in making himself absolute; and his task might be rendered easier if he could represent himself as the lineal heir of the old kings. Many circumstances might work in his favour. A patrician, invested, as Aisymnêtês or under any other dictatorial title, with unusual powers, might refuse to return to his private station and even hand on his powers to his son. More commonly the way towards the establishment of a tyranny was found by assuming the character of a demagogue who declaimed against the wanton insolence and cruelty of his own order, and perhaps by exhibiting evidence of their wrongdoing obtained the grant of a body-

Origin of tyrannies

guard, who acted as his instruments in the sequel of his enterprise.

The family of Peisistratos

The founder of the great Athenian tyranny was Peisistratos, whose mother was, as we have seen, a cousin of the mother of Solon. His father Hippokrates traced his descent back to Neleus, the father of Nestor. A branch of the great Pylian family was said to have settled in Attica, and their pedigrees and alliances are given with an elaborate precision which goes for nothing, when genealogies equally elaborate exhibit the same names in connexions which leave no doubt of their shadowy nature. The value of the list of Eleian kings must be measured by the name of Endymion, the plunging sun, the child of Protogeneia (the early dawn), the darling of Selênê (the moon), and the husband of Asterodia, who, like Ursula with her great company of virgins, has her path among the innumerable stars, represented by her fifty daughters. Intermarriages with the family of Melanthos might be adduced to explain the claim of affinity with Kodros (Codrus) which Peisistratos is said to have made.

Birth of Peisistratos

As in the case of Solon, so in that of Peisistratos, the date of his birth cannot be fixed with any exactness. We can scarcely suppose that he would be less than two or three and twenty years of age before the breaking out of the second war with Megara for Salamis, if, as we are told, he had then acquired influence enough to turn the scale in favour of the election of Solon as general. If so, he must at the time of his death have been much more than ninety years of age.

Connexion between Peisistratos and Solon

In any case he was a much younger man than Solon, who was attracted by his great personal beauty not less perhaps than by his manifest abilities. A strong feeling of friendship sprung up between them, which is said to have betrayed the power of that terrible sentiment which went far towards poisoning the sources of Greek social life. In the second Megarian war they were united in military enterprise as in affection, and Peisistratos seized

the port of Nisaia, while Solon was busied in the island of Salamis.

During the time of Solon's reforms and legislation we hear little of Peisistratos beyond the expression of Solon's opinion that apart from his overweening ambition Athens had not a better or a more able citizen. The fact that he remained thus comparatively obscure may be taken as proof that we are approaching the limits of trustworthy history; but our actual knowledge of the career of Peisistratos and that of his sons rests altogether on oral tradition. Half a century had passed after the death of Solon before the tyranny of the Peisistratids was finally put down; and this event, again, preceded by a few years the births of Herodotos and Thucydides. In dealing with the history of this time Thucydides claimed to speak with authority solely on the ground that he had carefully sifted the testimony of those who professed to be acquainted with the story. There is always a likelihood that a tradition which satisfied so keen and impartial an inquirer as Thucydides may be substantially correct: but this accuracy cannot be regarded as extending to details. It has been well said that the history of the Peisistratids is very much like many portions of Roman history, where the most minute narratives are for the most part unhistorical, while the indefinite statements are more correct.

Evidence for the history of the Peisistratid dynasty

There is little to be added to the account already given of the internal state of Attica after the return of Solon from his travels (p. 31). It is possible that Peisistratos may have attached himself to the Hyperakrians, or men of the hills, in order to throw a veil over the fact that he was really attracting to himself a more formidable body from the poorer class of the citizens. This seems to have been the opinion of Herodotos, resting on the story which he goes on to relate. Appearing in the Agora, supported by a large gathering of people, he declared that he had had a most narrow escape from an attack of his enemies, the partisans of Lykourgos or

Stratagem of Peisistratos in order to acquire a bodyguard

Megakles, who had fallen upon him in the country. As evidence for this, he pointed to wounds, which, we are told, he had inflicted on himself and on his mules, and besought the Athenians to grant him a bodyguard to protect him from the violence of his opponents.

According to one version of the tale his request was granted as a reward for his services in the war with Megara forty years before: according to another, the appointing of the guard was proposed in the public assembly and carried by Ariston in spite of the earnest opposition of Solon. The men told off for this task served at first with clubs for their only weapons: but the clubs may without much difficulty have been exchanged for spears. However this may have been, they took, we are told, an active part in carrying out the plan of Peisistratos. Rising up with him, they seized the Akropolis; the city lay at their mercy; and the tyranny became an accomplished fact.

Usurpation of Peisistratos, ? 560 B.C.

His partisans amongst the commonalty, that is amongst the non-tribal citizens, must also soon have discovered that Peisistratos had made his compact with them only to break it. It is impossible that they should have helped him on the road to power, had it not been that they looked either for an extension of freedom, or for better safeguards for it, or for relief from some glaring wrongs by which they felt themselves oppressed. Having made himself master of Athens, Peisistratos, we are assured by Herodotos, introduced not one single constitutional change. He neither disturbed the privileges of the Eupatrids nor interfered with their administration of law. So doing, he acted, in the judgment of Herodotos, wisely and well: but if so it be, he must have been charged with a breach of covenant by his followers, who were convinced of their folly only when it was too late.

Character of his government

Peisistratos had, in truth, sufficient discernment to see that he could not, on the whole, have a more convenient instrument for his designs than the constitution as modified by Solon. The worst wrongs under which the great body of

the people had suffered had been lightened or removed; and the ruling class at Athens were no longer regarded with the odium which attached to them in many other Greek cities.

Nominal maintenance of the Solonian constitution by Peisistratos

Peisistratos, clearly, had no wish to call down this odium on himself. His wish was to do all that could be done for the improvement of the city and the benefit of the people at the most moderate cost. Thucydides speaks in so pointed a way of the family relations of the Peisistratids as to warrant the inference that he was himself personally connected with them; and although his commendations of them are very marked, he has never been charged with distorting facts in their favour.

When then his opinion is in close agreement with that of Herodotos, we may fairly allow that the credit of wise statesmanship belongs to them: and from Thucydides we learn that with no direct impost beyond an income tax of five per cent. they found means to carry on wars, to pay the costs of public festivals and sacrifices, and to embellish the city. Among the public works carried out by this dynasty was the decoration of the fountain of Kallirhoê and the setting up of the statues or pillars of Hermes in various parts of the country. The gigantic temple of Zeus Olympios was begun by Peisistratos, but it was destined to remain unfinished down to the days of the Roman Emperor Hadrian.

Public works of the Peisistratids

With a true instinct Peisistratos saw that his own power would be most surely strengthened by fostering the religious enthusiasm of the people. A Pan-Athenaic festival had already been celebrated yearly; but he resolved that a feast of the same name and on a vastly more magnificent scale should be held once in every four years. This greater festival was to serve as the crown of the religion which bound together the Ionic tribes, as the common centre for the highest developments in art, in the drama, in painting, in sculpture, and in music. An altar to the Twelve Gods, and another to Apollon in the Pythian Temenos, were accord-

The Pan-Athenaic festival

ing to Thucydides among the works achieved by the grandson of Peisistratos.

Athens was thus fairly advancing on the road to imperial splendour; but in spite of these efforts for the higher education of the citizens, the course of despotism was not destined to run smoothly for Peisistratos. For reasons already explained (p. 35) the sentiment of reverence for kings had never been very strong among the Greek tribes. It was perhaps less powerful at Athens than elsewhere: and therefore a stronger dislike in the abstract for irresponsible rulers would go along with considerable indifference to the risk of their falling under their sway. The common Greek sentiment as to the distinction between kings and tyrants must have been of comparatively late growth, and in its origin it must have been oligarchic rather than democratic. According to this feeling the hereditary king, whose authority was traced from ancestors older than the oldest tradition, was deserving of all reverence; and at no time was the Greek wanting in due respect for the despots of Persia, Babylon, or Sardeis.

Greek notions of kingship

But the man who had made himself absolute at the expense of an established political order was to be treated like a wolf who had broken into a fold of sheep, and was to be hunted down without mercy. Of course, the organized state thus overthrown could only be the Eupatrid or patrician government, for which alone it was possible to claim a religious sanction, making all violation of it a sacrilege.

Greek notions of tyrants

It was not improbably for this reason that on the uprising of Peisistratos the Athenians treated with so much coldness and indifference the imprecation or curse of Solon (p. 27). In the eyes of the old Gamoroi, or landholders (p. 34), a tranquil watching of the issue would seem an offence scarcely to be pardoned: for the non-tribal citizens and for the Hektemorians who had just been suffered to plant their feet on the threshold of freedom this was not quite so obvious a truth. The hope that, having

Expulsion of Peisistratos

obtained something, they might through Peisistratos obtain a little more, would tempt them to show him a fair field even if they yielded him no favour. The disappointment of this hope would bring with it no slight danger for the permanence of this tyranny: and such, in fact, was the result. A coalition between the people of the plains (the Pediaioi) and those of the sea coast (the Paraloi) was followed by the expulsion of the despot, possibly during the year after his usurpation.

But his banishment only proved more clearly the absence of any ruling spirit; and the Alkmaionid chief, Megakles, resolved to cut short the state of anarchy by offering to restore Peisistratos on the condition that he should marry his daughter. The terms were accepted; and his restoration was rendered the more easy by a sight which, it is implied, was taken by the people to be nothing less than a manifestation of the goddess Athenê. According to the story of Herodotos, the conspirators obtained the services of a woman named Phyê, belonging to the Paionian tribe, whose height and beauty seemed to be more than human. Placing this woman in a chariot, they made proclamation that the people should make haste to welcome Peisistratos, whom the goddess herself was bringing back to her own Akropolis. Hurrying to the scene, they saw a majestic female form six feet high, and taking her for Athenê, gave her worship and received the man whom she was restoring to his lost power. This woman is said, in some versions of the tale, to have become the wife of Hipparchos, the son of Peisistratos; but the whole story is treated by Herodotos with a profound contempt which seems to imply the existence of a general unbelief in his day that manifestations of the gods could any longer take place. If we chose to apply a strict criticism to the narrative, we might question the possibility that a woman of such commanding size and beauty could remain unknown in a society so small as that of Athens, or even as that of Attica. But it is difficult to measure the stupidity of a mob; and all that we need say is that, politically, the stratagem seems superfluous. The union

Restoration of Peisistratos, ? 555 B.C.

of two factions had brought about the expulsion of the tyrant: the adherence of either one of these two to Peisistratos would at once restore the balance in his favour.

But the Kylonian curse (p. 13) which rested on the house of Megakles cast its shadow on the mind of Peisistratos, who resolved that the marriage which he had been compelled to contract should be a barren one; and the discovery of this purpose led, we are told, to a reconciliation of the Alkmaionid chief with Lykourgos and to the second expulsion of the despot, who spent ten years in exile, sojourning chiefly in the Euboian Eretria, and, among other tasks, helping Lygdamis to establish his tyranny in the island of Naxos. The service rendered to these and other cities were rewarded by large contributions in money, and on the part of Lygdamis with more active help, when in the opinion of Peisistratos and his sons the time had come for making another attempt to seize the sceptre which had been wrested from them.

Second expulsion of Peisistratos, ? 554 B.C.

This second restoration is represented as due to the same cause which had led to his first success. The main body of the citizens now, as then, looked on the drama which was being enacted before them with lukewarmness, if not with indifference. Peisistratos occupied Marathon without opposition; and when on his moving from that place an attempt was made to bar his way to the city, the Athenian leaders allowed him to fall upon their forces while some were dicing and others sleeping after their morning meal. Riding towards Athens, Hippias and Hipparchos told the citizens whom they met what had happened and bade them go home. The order was obeyed without hesitation, and for a third time Peisistratos was master of the Akropolis. But he had now resolved that no such combinations as those from which he had suffered should ever again be formed against him. Megakles went into banishment with his followers. His other opponents were compelled to give hostages, whom Peisistratos placed in the hands of his friend Lygdamis, the despot of Naxos;

Second and final restoration of Peisistratos, ? 544 B.C.

and the introduction of a band of Thrakian mercenaries into the city enabled him to set his enemies at defiance.

Having thus definitely established his power, he went on to secure the favour of the gods. This task he achieved partly by purifying the island of Delos, in other words, by removing all the dead bodies which had been buried within sight of the temple of Apollon, and partly also by an act at Athens which he may have found even more congenial. He levelled the houses of the Alkmaionid tribesmen, and cast the bones of their dead beyond the borders of Athenian territory.

Purification of Delos

For Peisistratos himself there was to be no more interchange of disaster and success. No attempts were made to disturb him in the possession of his power. He died despot of Athens, three and thirty years, we are told, after his first usurpation, 527 B.C. We need not doubt that he was twice driven out and twice brought back; but beyond this we have seemingly no means of definitely fixing the chronology of his career. We cannot tell when his first expulsion took place or how long it lasted; nor can we determine the interval which passed between his first restoration and his second banishment. It is not a little to his credit that we hear of no change in the general character of his government after his second restoration. Unquestionably, he knew that any attempt to introduce at Athens the license of Oriental despotism would be an act of political suicide; and he may have felt that his real ends would be gained more easily by affecting to fall in with the popular humour rather than by ostentatiously going counter to it. We are told that once he even allowed himself to be summoned for trial before the Council of Areiopagos; but if he appeared before their tribunal, he would be accompanied by his bodyguard of Thrakian mercenaries, and the certainty of acquittal is a significant comment on his parade of obedience to the letter of the law.

Death of Peisistratos, 527 B.C.

The story of the sons of Peisistratos can scarcely be separated from that of Peisistratos himself. They are both

of them links in that chain of real causes which brought about the invasions first of Dareios and then of Xerxes.

The sons of Peisistratos

These true causes may be traced with perfect clearness through the narrative of Herodotos; but although the historian is fully conscious of their importance, they are altogether distinct from that series of religious causes or sequences, in which, with some occasional misgivings, he had on the whole a deep and immovable faith. But in the relations of the Peisistratids with other tyrants and subsequently with the Persian king we have that full explanation of events which is needed to make them as intelligible as any incidents of our own time; and we see how thoroughly then, as now, the movements of the people and those of their leaders or oppressors are determined by influences which have nothing to do with the traditional religious belief or the exploits of their mythical heroes.

The example of Peisistratos was not thrown away, we are assured, on his sons. Impressed by his statesmanlike sagacity,

Murder of Kimon

they showed themselves not less sober and moderate in their rule. It is not, however, from Thucydides (p. 40) that we receive a story which seems to run counter to this favourable judgment; but Herodotos relates a very dark tale of the murder of Kimon the father of the celebrated Miltiades by their emissaries at night. Kimon had been thrice victor in the horse race at the Olympian festival. On his second victory, instead of giving his own name, he proclaimed Peisistratos as the conqueror. For this compliment the despot who had banished him from Athens brought him back under a pledge for his personal safety. His third victory seems to have awakened the jealousy of Hippias and Hipparchos; and he was assassinated by their order.

This story, if it be true, would show that irresponsible power was tempting the sons of Peisistratos into the usual

Story of Harmodios and Aristogeiton

paths followed by tyrants. It carries us to the bullies and bravoes of the days of the Stuarts. But, if we believe the tradition, the deed which led to the overthrow of the dynasty was one which has been morally

proved against James VI. of Scotland. In an evil hour Hipparchos tried to form with the beautiful Harmodios the intimacy into which James wished to decoy Alexander Ruthven. The issue was different: the guilt in either case was the same. Unable to carry out his design, James added murder to impurity, and blasted the reputation of a high-spirited family in order to preserve his own. Greek sentiment and manners brought about another sequel in the case of Hipparchos. The fears or the wrath of Aristogeiton, the lover of Harmodios, were awakened by this attempt on his paramour; and the end was precipitated by an insult which Hipparchos, from his wish to show the indignation which he felt at his own rejection, offered to the sister of Harmodios. Having invited her to take her place in a religious procession as one of the Kanephoroi or basket bearers, he dismissed her when she came as unfit for the service. With a few of his partisans Aristogeiton determined to await the great Pan-Athenaic festival, feeling sure that on seeing the blow struck the main body of the citizens would hasten to join them. But on the day of the festival the conspirators were amazed to see one of their number talking familiarly with Hippias, and hurried to the inference that they were betrayed. They were, however, resolved that the man who had injured them should die. Finding Hipparchos at the temple of the daughters of Leos, they killed him there. Harmodios was slain on the spot by the tyrant's guards; Aristogeiton for the moment escaped. Hippias was at the suburb of the Kerameikos, when he heard the tidings. With singular presence of mind he commanded the hoplites or heavy-armed soldiers who were to take part in the procession to lay down their arms and go to a spot which he pointed out. Soldiers always so piled their arms before listening to any harangue from their general; and these men looked for such an harangue from Hippias now. But the arms were seized by the Thrakian mercenaries, and all citizens found with daggers were regarded as sharing in the conspiracy. Aristogeiton was put to the torture, and the same measure was meted out to Leaina,

a woman belonging to the class known as Hetairai, and brought into prominence by the miserable sentiment which in Greece led to the seclusion of free women and to the almost complete alienation of husbands from their wives. Leaina was the mistress, according to one tradition, of Aristogeiton, according to another of Harmodios. From neither Aristogeiton nor Leaina did the torture succeed in extracting any confession; and the story ran that rather than betray those whom she loved Leaina bit out her tongue. At Athens public opinion would allow no memorial to a woman of her class; but the memory of her devotion was preserved, it is said, by the statue of a tongueless lioness set up in the vestibule of the Akropolis.

Death of Hipparchos; Despotism of Hippias, 514 B.C.

Hipparchos had been struck down, 514 B.C. Hippias remained despot of Athens for four years longer; but the character of his rule, as we learn from both Herodotos and Thucydides, had undergone a thorough change. It was now marked by much suspicion and harshness, and by the murder of many citizens, until the Alkmaionids, aided by a Spartan army, drove him from Athens to lay plots elsewhere for the recovery of his power.

History of Thucydides.

Such in its general features was the story of the expulsion of the Peisistratidai; and of the two great historians who have dealt with it one was animated by a marked friendly feeling for the tyrant and his family. But even Thucydides was compelled to show his countrymen how strangely popular tradition may deceive. The current belief that Hipparchos succeeded Peisistratos as being his eldest son, and that the dynasty came to an end when he was smitten in the Leokorion was in fact a mere delusion. The popular song hallowed with the myrtle wreath the sword which by slaying the tyrant had given back equal laws to Athens, and the popular sentiment acquired strength by appealing to the honours and the immunities from all public burdens granted to the descendants of Harmodios and Aristogeiton. In spite of all this seeming evidence to the

contrary, Hippias was the eldest son, and far from ceasing to rule when his brother died, he only exchanged the whip for the scourge of scorpions.

But the circumstances attending the death of his brother and the state of popular feeling which followed had at least impressed Hippias with the prudence of providing betimes against the evil day. His thoughts turned naturally to the Persian king whose power after the fall of the Lydian monarchy by the overthrow of Kroisos (Crœsus) had been extended to the shores of the Hellespontos, and who had thus become the lord of the Athenian settlement at Sigeion. The fact that Athenians were thus established at the entrance of the strait may sufficiently explain the embassy which came to Athens from the Thrakian tribe of the Dolonkians who then inhabited the Chersonesos; but here, as elsewhere, the religious causes at work were in the judgment of Herodotos of a very different kind.

Political schemes of Hippias

According to his story, it was the Delphian god who, when the Dolonkians besought his aid in their distress, counselled them to introduce into their territory an Hellenic colony and to take as its leader (or Oikistes) the man from whom after leaving his temple they should first receive hospitality. This hospitality they sought in vain until they reached Athens, where they were kindly welcomed by Miltiades, the son of Kypselos, a man well known already as a victor in the four-horsed chariot race at Olympia. With him the Dolonkians did not plead in vain. Mild though the rule of Peisistratos was, Miltiades chafed under it; and having the sanction of the Delphian god, he readily sailed with a body of Athenian citizens to the Chersonesos, where he received from the people the power and the title of tyrant.

Miltiades, son of Kypselos

Dying childless, this Miltiades left Stesagoras, the son of his brother Kimon, heir of his power and wealth. Miltiades had engaged in war with the people of Lampsakos. Stesagoras followed his example and was murdered by a man of that city. On his death his brother, Miltiades, the future victor of Marathon, was sent out by Hippias as

Miltiades, son of Kimon.

governor of the Athenian colony. Maintaining himself here by the aid of a body of mercenaries, Miltiades married the daughter of the Thrakian chief Oloros. But the course of events had taught Hippias that it was far more to his interest to be at peace with the Lampsakenes than at war.

Connexion of Hippias with Hippoklos, tyrant of Lampsakos

Hippoklos, the despot of that city, was in high favour with Dareios, the Persian king; and though in himself a Lampsakene might be an object of contempt to an Athenian, yet under the circumstances Hippias was glad to give his daughter Archedikê in marriage to the son of Hippoklos. Sigeion, he thought, might in the event of his being driven from Athens be a safe refuge for himself, and in the tyrant of Lampsakos he would have a friend through whom he might gain personal access to the Persian sovereign.

Intrigues of the Alkmaionids for the expulsion of Hippias

While Hippias was thus guarding himself against possible dangers, his enemies were intent on devising means for bringing about the expulsion which he dreaded. Of these enemies the most earnest and the most powerful were the men of the Alkmaionid tribe, headed by Megakles, the father in law of Peisistratos. Many years before this time, the Alkmaionids had undertaken the contract for the restoration of the Delphian temple, which had been burnt by accident, and they secured to themselves the lasting gratitude of the Delphians by going far beyond the terms of the bargain. The front was to be built simply with common tufa: the contractors covered it with Parian marble. By this liberality they more than neutralised the failure of their attempt to occupy Leipsydrion, a post on the mountain range of Parnes on the borderland between Boiotia and Athens. From this post they hoped to carry on their enterprise for the overthrow of the Peisistratid tyranny; but Hippias succeeded in dislodging them from it, and indeed he seemed able to bid them defiance through his friendship with the Spartans and his alliance with the Thessalians as well as the Makedonian chief Amyntas.

Still the Alkmaionids were not discouraged. The Delph-

ians were already in their debt, and this debt was increased by further gifts from the Alkmaionids, who exacted only the one condition that to all Spartans who might consult the oracle the answer should be ended with the form 'Athens must be set free.' Tired out with the reiteration of these words, the Spartans, going sorely against their own inclination, sent a force by sea under Anchimolios, which landed at the little harbour of Phalêron. Hippias was prepared for their coming; the Spartans were utterly defeated, and their leader was slain.

Spartan interference against Hippias

But the Delphian god repeated still only the old command; and the Spartan king Kleomenes was charged with carrying out a second invasion of Attica. His troops were met in the first instance by the Thessalian mercenaries of Hippias: but these on losing a few of their number turned and fled straight to Thessaly, and Kleomenes, advancing to Athens, shut up Hippias within the Pelasgic wall. Even now, so far as could be seen, Hippias had nothing to fear. The Spartan incompetency in sieges was already almost a by-word. In a few days or within two or three weeks at furthest they would depart; and in the meantime the besieged were amply provided with food. But an accident decisively changed the state of things. Hippias made an attempt to get his children smuggled out of the country. They were seized by the Spartans, and in order to get possession of them Hippias agreed to leave Attica within five days, 510 B.C.

Expedition of Kleomenes. Expulsion of Hippias, 510 B.C.

It was indeed an astonishing result. A Spartan king, the natural friend of oligarchs, driven on against his will by what he supposed to be a Divine command, had accomplished a work which at the time the Athenians could not have achieved for themselves. The very completeness of the success which had crowned the intrigues of the Alkmaionids might seem to draw suspicion on the tale: but we may, nevertheless, be dealing with one of those true stories which are stranger than fiction.

Complete success of the Spartans

Fifty years had passed since the first establishment of the tyranny of Pesistratos, when his son betook himself to the place of refuge which he had prepared at Sigeion, A pillar set up on the Akropolis exhibited for the execration of future ages the evil deeds of the dynasty and the names of its members. Later tradition, in order to magnify the share which the Athenians had had in the work of their own deliverance, took pleasure in relating that their expulsion was followed by the deaths of many of their adherents, by the banishment of others, and by the infliction of political infamy (Atimia) on the rest.

Later traditions respecting the expulsion of Hippias

All this is disproved at once, if the story be true that the departure of Hippias was a condition dependent on the restoration of his children. That Hippias should make terms for himself alone is to the last degree unlikely; but the orator Andokides, from whom we receive these particulars, jumbled together either from ignorance or wilfully the events of the campaign of Marathon with those of the invasion of Xerxes ten years later; and we are tempted to think that in so doing he was guilty of impudent fiction, when we find him placing two of his own great-grandfathers in command of the Athenian Demos who return from exile and put down the tyranny of the Peisistratidai. The only thing that can be said for Andokides is that he would scarcely have ventured to palm off the story, if he had been speaking of a time for which his hearers possessed a contemporary history.

Fictions of later orators

If the Athenians had shown themselves lukewarm or indifferent at certain stages in the history of the tyranny which had thus been brought to an end, the contrast of the activity which followed its overthrow was amazing. Within a few months after the departure of Hippias the constitution underwent the reforms which bear the name of Kleisthenes; and these reforms were followed by an outburst of military energy which placed the Athenians at the head of the whole Ionic race and made them formidable rivals of the most powerful Dorian cities. The startling changes accomplished with such astonishing rapidity

Increased energy of the Athenian people

drew from Herodotos the emphatic declaration that freedom of speech must be a right good thing, since under their tyrants the Athenians were in war no better than their neighbours, but on being rid of them rose at once to preeminence, the reason being that forced service for a master took away all their spirit, whereas on winning their freedom each man made vigorous efforts for himself.

Athenian embassy to Artaphernes, ? 505 B.C.

Athens was free; but Hippias had by no means abandoned the hope that he might once more and finally become master of the Akropolis, and many circumstances were telling in his favour. The very efforts made by the Athenians to guard against another restoration of the tyranny told rather for him than against him. To anticipate his intrigues they sent ambassadors (? 505 B.C.) to Sardeis, to propose an independent alliance with the Persian despot. On being brought into the presence of Artaphernes, the satrap of Lydia, the envoys were told that Dareios would admit them to an alliance if they would give him earth and water—in other words, if they would confess themselves his subjects. To this demand the envoys actually gave their assent; but their act was indignantly repudiated by the whole body of Athenian citizens. This incident is one of extreme importance, and is of more significance than multitudes of the more circumstantial narratives which profess to deal with the causes of the great conflict between the East and West.

Congress at Sparta for the restoration of Hippias

As for the Spartans, they soon discovered that they had been tricked into carrying out the designs of the Alkmaionidai, and that the divine command which had seemed to sanction their acts was a mere fiction, for the utterance of which due payment had been made to the Pythian priestess. A congress of allies was summoned to meet at Sparta; and in this assembly plainer language was heard than had ever been addressed to either Dorian or Ionian ears. Before them Hippias appeared to plead his cause; and in his hearing the Spartans confessed with bitter regret their folly in having been duped

by the Delphian oracle, and in having given over the city of Athens into the hands of an ungrateful Demos, and then went on to beg for aid in the task of punishing the Athenians and restoring Hippias to his lost power.

Opposition of the Corinthians

A few years later the Spartans might have pleaded with better effect; but at present the Corinthians could not be brought to see that they were warming a snake which would turn round and bite them. The representative of Corinth, Sosikles, burst out into an indignant condemnation of this selfish and heartless policy. 'Surely heaven and earth must be going to change places,' he said, 'and fishes will live on land and men on the sea, now that you mean to put down free governments and to restore in each city that most unrighteous and most bloodthirsty thing—a despotism. If you think that a tyranny has a single redeeming point, try it first yourselves and then seek to bring others over to your opinion. But in fact you have not tried it, and being religiously resolved that you will not try it, you yet seek to force it upon others. Experience would have taught you a more wholesome lesson. We have had this experience and we have learned this lesson.'

This debate, of which we may accept the narrative of Herodotos as a substantially correct record, shows with singular clearness the nature of the political education through which the most oligarchical states of Hellas were passing. The Corinthians and the Spartans were agreed, on the one hand, in their hatred of any system which should even question the privileges of the ancient Eupatrid houses, and which, breaking down the old religious barriers which excluded al but the members of those houses from all public offices and even from all civil power, should intrust the machinery of government to what they termed the herd or rabble of the profane. Both alike, further, hated a system by which a man placed himself at the head of a state, disowning all allegiance to its laws, and subjecting everything to his own caprice. At the hands of such a man the people might pass, as in a

Points of likeness between the Corinthians and the Spartans

moment, from moderate and sober government to the grossest cruelty and oppression; and even Spartans would feel that such a system differed in kind from their own. They were, indeed, under a hard and lifelong discipline: but this discipline was self-imposed, and it was administered by officers elected by the citizens, to whom even their kings were responsible. Hence the Corinthian Sosikles could say with thorough truth that the Spartans had no experience of the state of things called a tyranny, and therefore could have no real notion of its working.

Points of difference between them

The real difference between the Spartans and the Corinthians lay in this: that the former saw and that the latter failed to see the true tendencies of Athenian democracy. To the former it was clear that these tendencies must be fatal to all oligarchical rule. The latter found out their mistake as time went on; and the certainty that sooner or later they would find it out formed the gist of the speech addressed to the assembly by Hippias himself. The time was coming, he assured them, in which they would find the Athenians a thorn in their side. Herodotos ascribes the confidence with which Hippias spoke to his acquaintance with ancient prophecies; but an Athenian tyrant may, at the least, be credited with a sagacity equal to that of a Spartan king, and Kleomenes had no doubts about the matter. But for the present the exhortations of both were thrown away. The allies unanimously refused to allow any interference with the internal administration of independent Hellenic cities; and Hippias went back disappointed and foiled to Sigeion.

Schemes and intrigues of Hippias

But if Hippias could get no help at Sparta, he might be more successful with the Persian king. Not much patriotism could be looked for in a Greek tyrant; and Hippias beyond question returned from the Spartan congress determined to regain his power by fair means or by foul. We cannot doubt that with this purpose he taxed the friendship of Hippoklos, the Lampsakene despot, to the uttermost; and we are expressly assured by Herodotos

that from the moment of his leaving Sparta he left not a stone unturned to provoke Artaphernes, the Persian satrap of Lydia, to the conquest of Athens in order that he might rule it as a tributary of Dareios. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that Dareios had heard the whole story of his expulsion, and that he gave no such answer to his prayers as effectually to discourage his importunity.

The influence of Hippias was, in fact, the turning point in the history of the East and the West; and it was impossible that his action could escape notice. The Athenians were perfectly aware of the way in which their old tyrant was employing himself at Sardeis, and their ambassadors, appearing before Artaphernes for the second time, laid before him clearly the whole state of the case and urged every available argument to dissuade the Persian sovereign from interfering in the affairs of the Western Greeks. The answer of Artaphernes was emphatic and memorable; and we cannot doubt that it was given with the full knowledge and sanction of Dareios. He charged the Athenians, as they valued their safety, to receive Hippias again as their lord. The Athenians retorted by a flat refusal and thus showed that they regarded the command of Artaphernes as a practical declaration of war.

Second embassy from Athens to Artaphernes, ? 500 B.C.

As being now at open enmity with the Persian power, they sent a force of twenty ships to aid Aristagoras of Miletos in the ill-starred enterprise in which Sardeis was burnt. From the regions of sober fact we are carried away into the land of myth and fiction. On hearing that the Athenians had had something to do with the burning of the Lydian capital, Dareios speaks as though he had never till then heard their name. This is a sample of the details which form the greater part of the history of these times; and they are essentially dramatic, not historical.

Share of the Athenians in the revolt of Aristagoras

About twelve years later Hippias stood with a Persian host on the field of Marathon. Thus far the Persians had advanced virtually without resistance; and Hippias, we cannot doubt, would tell them of the triumphant march of his father

Peisistratos from Marathon to Athens just about fifty years before. In the interval the public feeling of Attica had undergone a complete change. The servile dread of the old houses had been swept away, and every citizen had learnt that he was a member of an independent and self-governed community; and thus by a strange turn in the course of things the banished tyrant of Athens on setting foot once more on Attic ground was confronted by the very man whom, as an apt disciple in his own school of tyranny, he had sent to govern the Thrakian Chersonesos (p. 49).

The Persians with Hippias at Marathon, 490 B.C.

This time, before Hippias could reach Athens, there was work to be done; and he busied himself in drawing up his allies in battle array on the plain of Marathon. He had a vision which seemed to promise well for the recovery of his former power; but a more visible sign was regarded as pointing in another direction. A violent fit of coughing forced one of his teeth from the jaw: and Hippias lacked the readiness of the Norman duke William in turning the accident to good account. Like the Norman invader of England, he might have taken seisin of the land on which he stumbled or stood. All that Hippias could do was, it is said, to bewail among his friends the fate which assigned to him no larger a portion of Attic soil than might suffice to bury a tooth.

Visions and portents

But Hippias possibly was counting more on the intrigues of his partisans in the Athenian city than on the results of an open battle. He took the Persians, we are told, to Marathon because it furnished the most convenient ground for the operations of cavalry; yet the reports of the battle seem to prove conclusively that no horsemen fought there. If there be any truth in the story of the raising of the white shield, probably on the summit of Mount Pentelikos, a bolder or more sagacious plan could scarcely have been formed for furthering the interests of Hippias than that of bringing down on the city an overwhelming Persian force, as soon as the main body of the Athenians were

Plans of Hippias

well on their way to Marathon. So far as we can judge from the evidence at our command, Hippias planned the landing at Marathon for the very purpose of withdrawing the main Athenian force from the city and thus leaving it defenceless against the real attack to be made from the side of Phalêron. But for whatever reason the plan failed, and Hippias vanishes finally from our sight. Among late writers some like Cicero and Justin thought that he fell in the battle; others said that he died at Lemnos. He had not reached his father's years; but he was an old man before he made his last attempt to bring Athens once more under his yoke.

General character of the government of the Peisistratidai

That a dynasty like that of Peisistratos should last long, was scarcely possible in any other Greek city: at Athens it was impossible. The legislation of Solon had given an impulse to Athenian political instinct which could not be arrested, although for a time the Eupatrids remained unconscious that a death blow had been dealt to the principle of their own supremacy. But the character of their government stands out in favourable contrast with that of Greek despots generally; and there were points in which they deserved well of their countrymen. If they were not poets themselves, they could appreciate the powers of a poet in others; and the court of Hipparchos was rendered illustrious by the presence of Simonides of Keos, and of the Teian Anacreon. Here also, among others, Onomakritos occupied himself with making a collection of the oracles of Mousaios, until in an evil hour he allowed himself to be caught in the act of interpolating forged matter of his own; and here too, as some would think, an effort was made to establish the text of the Iliad and Odyssey as those poems are known to us. We thus face the gates of an intricate controversy, in which two questions call for examination, the one relating to the existence of a written literature in the time of the Peisistratidai, the other to the existence of the present text of our 'Homeric' poems in the days of Pindar or of Æschylus. Both these questions must be met by those who would form a fair judgement in the matter; but

they lead us away from the subject of Greek statesmanship. A library for purposes of reading, or for any purpose beyond that of consulting a text still handed down orally, may have been an impossibility for Peisistratos; but the only point which we have to mark is that both he and his sons, wittingly or unwittingly, did much to stimulate the mental activity of the Athenian people.

KLEISTHENES

WHEN at the instigation of Solon the Amphiktyonic council declared a sacred war against Kirrha, one of the chiefs who took part in the contest was Kleisthenes, despot of Sikyon (p. 9), the third of the dynasty founded by Orthagoras. Of this tyrant we have but a few passing glimpses, and all that we see drives us to conjectures which may or may not be in accordance with fact. He rules over subjects who are chiefly but not altogether Dorian; but he is not Dorian himself. The stories told of him seem to point to a bitter feud between Sikyon and Argos: but the acts which are ascribed to him may be his own, or they may merely reflect the popular antipathies among his Dorian and non-Dorian subjects.

Kleisthenes of Sikyon

In all Dorian towns, and so also in Argos and Sikyon, we find the three Dorian tribes, Hyllaeis, Dymanes, and Pamphyloi: and from this fact we might perhaps gather that Sikyon had been confederated with Argos, or subject to it, and that some attempt of the Argives to re-assert their old supremacy may have roused the opposition of Kleisthenes. Such a quarrel would explain the story which relates that Kleisthenes, who reserved for himself and his clansmen the title of Archelaoi, or rulers of the people, also assigned to the Dorian tribes the names of Oneatai, Hyatai, and Choireatai, or tribes of asses, swine, and pigs.

The three Dorian tribes

But Kleisthenes of Sikyon was the last of his dynasty: and these contemptuous names continued to be applied to the Dorian tribesmen for sixty years after his death. It would seem then that the despotism of Kleisthenes was followed by

the rule of an oligarchy strong enough to keep up the use of these names; and further, if this tale be true, it would follow that his dynasty was not overthrown by Spartan influence. The Spartans would beyond doubt have done away with this stigma on their Dorian kinsfolk, for it is absurd to suppose that the latter invented these epithets for themselves. But again we are told that at the end of the sixty years the Dorian tribes went back to the old tribal names, while the non-Dorian inhabitants accepted the name of Aigialeis from Aigialeus the son of the hero Adrastos; and if we put faith in this narrative, we must infer that this method of healing the old feud was the result of a change which substituted the rule of the people for that of the oligarchs. These are large and not unimportant inferences; but it must be confessed that they rest on loose and uncertain data.

Change of tribal names

Of Kleisthenes we are further told that he gave his daughter Agariste in marriage to the Alkmaionid Megakles, whom we have encountered already in the histories of Solon and Peisistratos (pp. 31, 42). The story of this marriage, as recorded in the pages of Herodotos, is a strange one. At the Olympic games Kleisthenes bade all who might care for the alliance to present themselves within sixty days at Sikyon as suitors for the hand of his daughter. The invitation was accepted by many of the noblest Eupatrids from Greek cities. From Athens came not only Megakles but one who by his beauty and strength excited a warmer feeling in the heart of Kleisthenes than any others. But Hippokleides lacked prudence, and as the time for the election of one of the suitors drew nigh, he exhibited some wonderful feats of agility and ended by dancing on his head upon a table. 'Friend, you have danced away your marriage,' was the only comment of Kleisthenes. 'It matters not,' was the terse retort of Hippokleides.

Story of Kleisthenes and Hippokleides

This story belongs apparently to the large class of legends put together to explain proverbial sayings: but it only adds

to the darkness which enwraps the history of the last tyrant of Sikyon. The gathering of the suitors may, as some have supposed, represent an anti-Dorian confederation, by which the continued existence of the Orthagorid dynasty was incidentally to be secured. Such a confederation may possibly have existed; but we have no warrant for asserting it as a fact. In the belief of Herodotos the Athenian Kleisthenes, the son of Megakles and Agariste, borrowed the idea of his reforms from those of his grandfather at Sikyon. If it be so, then the alleged changing of the Dorian tribal names may be really the result of measures of a much more important kind. But why a dynasty which had been distinguished, as Herodotos assures us, by the moderation and equity of its rule, should come to an end with a prince whose political virtues were at least equal to those of his predecessors, and who had achieved a greater renown in war, we cannot indeed explain. The whole narrative points, it would seem, to the one conclusion, that lost history can never be recovered.

Kleisthenes of Sikyon, and Kleisthenes of Athens

Of the younger Kleisthenes, the future statesman of Athens, we hear nothing more, until he comes almost suddenly into prominence soon after the expulsion of Hippias. He appears as one charged with a mission to which he has devoted his life: and this mission is to carry out to their logical consequences the principles which in his legislation Solon had contented himself simply with declaring, possibly because he himself failed to attach to them their true meaning. The mere fact of the Peisistratid usurpation, brought about as it was in a great part by the indifference of the main body of the citizens, showed that those principles were virtually in abeyance. This conclusion was warranted by the further fact that Peisistratos had not found it worth while to make any change in the forms of the constitution.

Principles involved in the reforms of Kleisthenes of Athens

Solon had, however, given a shock to the religious sentiment on which the predominance of the Eupatrids rested. The classification which made property the title to Athenian

citizenship insured to the poorest the right of voting in the Ekklesia or general assembly (p. 24), and therefore also a share in the election of the archons and of the members of the Probouleutic Council of Four Hundred (p. 25). This was a substantial gain; but it might by careful management be kept virtually in abeyance. Citizens whose incomes placed them in the first class were no better off, unless they were tribesmen, than members of the lowest class (p. 24); and to neutralise them altogether it was necessary only to repress the freedom of speech which alone gave them any political power. This seemingly was all that Peisistratos did. He might very safely and with great profit to himself allow the forms of the Solonian constitution to go on undisturbed, so long as he deprived them of all significance. The story which tells us that he obeyed a summons which cited him to appear before the archons tells us that his accuser allowed judgement to go by default. It was dangerous to press a charge against the master of a thousand clubmen or spear-bearers.

Condition of non-tribal citizens

The expulsion of Hippias restored things in theory to the position in which they had been when Peisistratos made himself despot. The result was not peace, but a renewal of the strife and divisions which it was the very purpose of Solon to put down. In the present quarrel the Alkmaionid Kleisthenes, the grandson of the Sikyonian tyrant, was opposed to Isagoras, the son of Isandros, of whom we now hear for the first time. Of the causes of the quarrel we have no details; but when we are told that the first act of Kleisthenes was to substitute new tribes in place of the old, we are at once driven to the conclusion that the contest involved the very foundations of social order, and that we cannot trust the statements which ascribe this change to a mere copying of the acts of his grandfather at Sikyon, and to a growing contempt of the Ionian name.

Substitution of new for the old tribes by Kleisthenes, 510 B.C.

The latter assertion seems especially doubtful. It is true that the Western Ionians, of whom the Athenians were now

indisputably the head, had begun to stand a little aloof from their old union with the Ionians of the East, who after the fall of the Lydian kings had become subjects of the Persian sovereign; but the time had not yet come when only the Asiatic Ionians cared to bear the name, if indeed they did more than answer to it themselves when so styled by their Ionian lords.

The Ionian name

All that Herodotos tells us of the measure of Kleisthenes is that he abolished the names of the old tribes and for four tribes substituted ten, each tribe having its own Phylarchos or chief, and each tribe being subdivided into ten Demoi or cantons. Without going further we can have no hesitation in saying that this classification must have involved a new principle, for the simple reason that, if it had not, the conflict between the two leaders would never have assumed formidable proportions. We need not, however, go far to seek the reasons which determined the action of Kleisthenes. For all practical purposes all non-tribal citizens were thrust down, as we have seen, into the fourth or Thetic class: and this class was being constantly increased by the influx of strangers allowed by Athenian commerce.

The ten Kleisthenean tribes

Even without this influx this class contained by far the larger portion of the population; with it the discontent with which they regarded their exclusion from all civil offices was becoming a serious and growing danger to the state. A man whose eyes were in any degree opened to the nature of the evil could not fail to see that the smouldering fire might at any moment burst into furious flame: and Kleisthenes, it cannot be doubted, perceived clearly that if this danger was to be avoided he must strike at the root of the religious organization of the Eupatrid houses. To create new tribes on the level of the old ones was beyond his power, for any addition to the number of phratries (clans) and of families contained in them would have been resented as a profanation and a sacrilege. One only road was open to him. The existing religious tribes must be set aside as political

Composition of the new tribes

units; and in their place must be substituted a larger number of new tribes divided into cantons and taking in the whole body of Athenian citizens. According to the express statement of Aristotle, Kleisthenes introduced into the new body thus formed many resident aliens and perhaps slaves.

There was nothing in these provisions which necessarily touched the houses and clans as religious societies founded on an exclusive worship. Their organization might go on independently of the state; but that which had thus far given them their importance was that the organization of the clans was the organization of the state also. The deliberate rejection of this system was thus a deathblow to the theory of Eupatrid ascendency. The vehement opposition of Isagoras is, therefore, at once explained; and no room is left for doubting that it was the proposal of this change which roused his antagonism, and that Kleisthenes was not tempted to promulgate his scheme merely as a new method of winning popularity at the expense of a rival who already stood in his way. The struggle at Athens anticipated the strife between the patricians and plebeians at Rome; and the same controversy was repeated in the conflict between the great families of the German and Italian cities and the guilds which grow up around them in the middle ages.

Causes of the opposition of Isagoras

But Kleisthenes was firmly resolved to put an end to local factions and jealousies, if it were possible to do so; and the methods which he devised for this purpose were first the splitting up of the tribes in portions scattered over the country, and secondly the ostracism. His care in providing that the cantons of the tribes should not be geographically adjacent is shown by the fact that by his arrangement the five Demoi of Athens itself belonged to five different tribes. But even in the Kleisthenian Demoi the religious bond was prominent. Each canton, like our modern parishes, had its own place of worship with its special rites: each levied its own taxes: and each kept its own register of enrolled citizens. Lastly, each tribe had its own worship in

Geographical distribution of the new tribes

its own chapel: and the system differed from that of the old patrician houses only in the fact that it was extended to take in all the citizens alike. This essential likeness in principle seems to distinguish the polity even of the most advanced of ancient democracies from the theories of modern citizenship.

But apart from the religious principle which was still allowed to work on, Kleisthenes carried out his democratic reforms practically to their logical conclusions. In the Probouleutic Council of the Four Hundred each of the four tribes had a hundred representatives. For this assembly Kleisthenes substituted the council of Five Hundred, to which all citizens were made eligible; and here therefore each of the ten new tribes was represented by fifty senators, who were, it seems, elected by lot.

The Council of Five Hundred

Nor was this the limit of the Kleisthenean reforms. Under the Solonian constitution the command in war was left in the hands of the third archon, known as the Archon Polemarchos: but now each of the tribes elected one of the ten generals. With these generals the Polemarch was for the present suffered to exercise a coordinate authority; but the functions of the ten Strategoi or generals were gradually extended to the management of the foreign affairs of the state, while the archons were restricted more and more to subordinate provinces of external administration.

The ten generals

Yet more, the Council of the Five Hundred sat now as a permanent court, fifty of the members under the title of Prytaneis taking their turn of attendance during each of the ten Prytaneiai, or Presidencies, into which the civil year was divided. These bodies of fifty were further subdivided into five bodies of ten each, who acted as Proedroi, or presidents, in the Senate for one fifth portion of each Prytaneia, of which six lasted for thirty-five, and four for thirty-six days each; and these ten daily elected by lot one of their own number to hold during his day of office the city seal and the keys of the Akropolis and the treasury. Thus there was now a permanent court in place of the occasional and irregular Probouleutic Council of

Constitution of the Council of Five Hundred

Solon, while the Ekklesia, or general assembly of citizens, met now not at rare or uncertain intervals, but probably once at least in each Prytaneia, or ten times during the year; and their freedom of speech, when they met, was no longer curbed by the dread of the spear-bearers or the mercenary guards of a despot. The result of the public deliberations became therefore for each citizen the expression of the will of the state, and to it he yielded a perfectly voluntary obedience.

The Heliaia

But according to Aristotle no one can in the true and full sense be called a citizen, unless he exercises in his own person a judicial as well as a legislative power; and this judicial authority was extended to all the citizens by the constitution of the Heliaia, for which 6,000 persons, called Dikastai or jurymen, were yearly elected by lot, 600 for each of the ten tribes. Of these 6,000 one thousand were set aside to fill vacancies caused by death or absence among the remaining 5,000, who were subdivided into ten decuries of 500 each. The distribution of the causes to be tried by these decuries was left to the Thesmothetai or six inferior archons; and thus no juryman knew, before the time of trial, in what court he might be called upon to sit. This ignorance furnished the best warrant that the juryman would approach without prejudice the cause which he was solemnly pledged to determine with strict justice and truth. In the discharge of this judicial function each decury, like the whole body of the Six Thousand, was known as the Heliaia—in other words, as the collective state: and as the verdict of the collective state must be final, so from the decision of the decuries there was no appeal.

How far this constitution was drawn out in all its details in the time of Kleisthenes we cannot say with any certainty.

Extent of the reforms of Kleisthenes

We know that down to the days of Aristeides the Dikasts or jurymen were not paid, and that before the Persian invasion they had not received their powers for dealing with criminal as distinguished from civil causes. But the arrangement which compelled the archons to assign causes to the jurymen in their several courts led

inevitably to the curtailment or rather to the dwindling away of their own powers. The public jury courts became more and more the safeguards of civil liberty: and the archons were more and more thrown into the background, until in the time of Perikles we find them among the officers who are chosen by lot.

Election of the archons by lot

In the time of Solon, no doubt, the Eupatrids would have preferred this method of appointment to an office which none but Eupatrids could fill: but when all the offices of state had been thrown open to the main body of the citizens, it was clear that the method of lottery could be applied only to those offices which needed for their adequate discharge nothing more than the average honesty and ability of ordinary citizens. The lot was never applied to the Strategoi, on whose wisdom, integrity, and bravery the safety of the state must depend; and the mere fact that it was applied to the selection of archons shows how completely the relative positions of the archons and the generals had been reversed.

Reforms of Aristeides

The final change in the standing of the archons was not the work of Kleisthenes, who left the citizens of the fourth class ineligible for the office. The step which led to the adoption of the lot in the selection of archons was not taken until Aristeides, nobly setting aside his deep oligarchical prejudices, proposed that all magistracies should henceforth be thrown open to citizens of all classes alike. The measure was as wise as it was just. It got rid of a restriction which, as time went on, must have become more and more irksome and galling; but at Athens, as in the Italian republics of the middle ages, eligibility and election remained two very different things. It was the lot alone which placed all to whom it was applied really on a level.

The archons and the court of Areiopagos

The lowering of the position of the archons told immediately on the court of Areiopagos. So long as only the wealthy members of tribes could become archons, the Areiopagos continued to be the bulwark of the oligarchy. When it became filled with archons

who had been chosen by lot, it was found to be nothing more than a respectable assembly of average Athenian citizens.

In noticing this outcome of the Kleisthenean reform we have been led beyond the lifetime of Kleisthenes himself.

Ostracism

There was, however, one other change, undoubtedly introduced by him, which had important results in the subsequent history of Athens. This was the institution of Ostracism, or banishment by the writing of the name of a citizen on a shell and placing the shell in a cask for gathering the votes so given. The theory, and the means devised for carrying it out, were both adapted to a political society in an early stage of growth. If the education of all the citizens had gone on at the same rate and all could be regarded as having the same respect for law, there would have been no need of any such safeguard. But this was not the case. The Eupatrid was naturally as anxious to bring the new state of things to an end as the non-tribal citizens could be to maintain and extend it. He would even hate it the more, because in his eyes its result must be the utter subversion and extinction of religion. For him therefore the temptation to upset this odious constitution would be almost irresistible; and if the attempt should be made by a man like Peisistratos or Isagoras, the state could look only to the main body of the people to come forward in defence of the law. In other words, the path to peace must be found through civil war. It became, therefore, a matter of the first importance to anticipate the plots, or intrigues, or violent usurpations of such men, and to do the work of the bodyguards of a despot without having recourse to brute force or bloodshed.

The need of a machinery which should accomplish this is strikingly shown in the saying attributed to Aristeides that,

Need of such a measure

if the Athenians knew their own interests, they would soon put an end to the political rivalry between Themistokles and himself by hurling them both into the Barathron. Kleisthenes would have had

no wish to hurl either into the abyss, nor did he see why at the worst the state should lose the services of more than one of its citizens. But for the present the overweening preponderance of any one man involved dangers from which the state ought to be protected; and Kleisthenes left it to the citizens to decide, once perhaps in each year, by a secret and irresponsible vote, whether amongst their own body there was anyone whose absence was a thing to be desired for the safety of the whole community. If they should so decide, the citizen so sentenced departed ten years into an exile which brought with it neither loss of property nor civil infamy (Atimia, p. 51).

The working of the institution was very simple. When the Senate of Five Hundred had determined that there was need of using the instrument of Ostracism, the citizens were invited to inscribe each on a separate shell the name of the citizen who in their opinion ought to be banished. No one could be thus driven away, unless at least 6,000 votes were recorded against him—in other words, unless a fourth of the whole body of citizens desired his absence. It might indeed happen that more than one man might be so condemned; but by no possibility could more than four be driven away at the same time, and if no one had as many as 6,000 votes given against him, then no one was ostracised. If, on the other hand, any one was condemned by a sufficient number, he received notice to quit Athens in ten days: but except that he could no longer remain there, he was in no other respect the worse. The desired result was obtained without bloodshed and even without strife, and by a mode which left no room for the indulgence of personal illwill. Two rivals, like Themistokles and Aristeides, might wish to banish each other; but if the former set the machine of ostracism in motion, he might for all he knew bring about his own banishment instead of that of his opponent, or possibly the citizens might banish a third man whom neither of them had thus far regarded as formidable.

Working of Ostracism

The engineer is commonly said to be hoisted with his

own petard; and Kleisthenes is no exception to the supposed rule which makes the inventors of punishments victims of their own devices. Kleisthenes is spoken of by some as the first man ostracised. There is no evidence whatever for the fact. The first man on whom the vote fell was Hipparchos, a kinsman of the Peisistratidai; and this fact proves that if adherents of Hippias went with him into exile, they went of their own free will. Ninety years after the time of Kleisthenes the last vote fell on Hyperbolos, who sought to bring about the banishment of statesmen whom he was conceited enough to term his rivals; but it was held that the ostracism had done him too much honour. On the whole the Athenians had no cause to be ashamed of a device which did them far more good than harm, and which was so far from being the necessary fruit of democratic suspicions and jealousies that it fell into disuse just when the government of Athens was most thoroughly democratical.

Instances of Ostracism

This constitution, with its free-spoken Ekklesia or general assembly and its permanent Probouleutic senate or court, Isagoras determined, if it were possible, at all hazards to destroy. His Eupatrid instincts would assure him that, unless the impulse given by freedom of speech and the admission of citizens generally to public offices should be speedily repressed, the idea of restoring the old ascendency of his order must be given up as hopeless. He was not disposed to regard it as hopeless yet; but for him the matter was one for action, not debate. He appealed to the Spartan king Kleomenes, who eagerly took his part. Sending a herald to Athens, he charged the citizens to banish those among them on whom the curse of Kylon rested (p. 13). Compliance with this demand would make it impossible for Kleisthenes to remain at Athens: and the terror inspired by this curse was still so great that the citizens durst not refuse obedience.

Appeal of Isagoras to Kleomenes, king of Sparta

Kleisthenes left Athens with many of his friends; and Kleomenes, having entered the city with a small force, banished

seven hundred families whose names had been given to him by Isagoras. But here his success ended. The Council of Five Hundred refused to be dissolved, and the Spartan king with Isagoras and his followers was constrained to take refuge in the Akropolis. But they were not well provided like Hippias (p. 50), and before three days were over Kleomenes agreed to depart with his Spartan troops, and with Isagoras. For the adherents of Isagoras he made no terms; and the Athenians had now become so exasperated that they would be satisfied with nothing less than their death.

Expulsion of Kleisthenes from Athens

The departure of Kleomenes was followed by the immediate return of Kleisthenes with the seven hundred exiled families. The recent events had shown plainly that between Athens and Sparta there was a deadly quarrel; and the Athenians therefore resolved to anticipate the intrigues of Hippias by sending their own envoys to ask for an independent alliance with the Persian king. This embassy, the result of which we have already had to notice (p. 52), preceded only by a little while the congress at Sparta from which Hippias returned to Sigeion to renew the intreaties which led to the disaster of the Persian host under Datis and Artaphernes at Marathon.

Return of Kleisthenes

We can scarcely suppose that Isagoras ever again set foot on Athenian soil; nor have we any reason for thinking that Kleisthenes had again to leave the city for whose political welfare and growth he had done so much. But a veil falls over their subsequent personal history; and we have to content ourselves with marking the contrast between the traitorous selfishness of Isagoras and the resolute devotion of the man who resolved that the work of Solon should be carried on to its legitimate issue, and who allowed no dangers to divert him from his task.

Subsequent history of Kleisthenes and Isagoras

POLYKRATES

In strong contrast at first sight with the prudent moderation, if not the statesmanlike sagacity, of the western Hellenic tyrants, is the violent and oppressive rule of some who gained despotic power on the coasts and in the islands of what was known as Sporadic or scattered Hellas. In Continental Greece, as the country between the Cambunian range and the southern promontories of the Peloponnesos was termed, arbitrary or senseless violence, though it was not unknown, was still an exception. But it is well to see the character which Hellenic sovereignty might assume in cases where there was no check whatever from popular opinion, and where also the influence of the colossal despotisms of the East was the strongest.

Character of the Eastern Hellenic tyrants

The tyranny of Polykrates in Samos was contemporary with that of the Peisistratidai at Athens. Of his parentage nothing is known. His greatness began with himself, and with himself it ended; and both his prosperity and his fall stand out with startling vividness in the popular accounts of succeeding generations. Whatever the city of Samos may have been before his time, Herodotos declares emphatically that he made it the most magnificent in the world; and beyond doubt splendour was chiefly, and almost exclusively, the object at which he aimed. This end he could reach only by amassing power; and to increase his power he was ready to make or to break arrangements with any princes whose strength might be useful to himself, or whose weakness might hamper his action.

Faithless policy of Polykrates

The task of making himself a tyrant was, it would seem

an easy one. It was accomplished, according to Herodotos, with the aid of his brothers Pantagnotos and Syloson and of fifteen heavy-armed soldiers. He could not therefore have had to contend with those elements of growing freedom which made the enterprise of Peisistratos so hazardous at Athens. But whatever constitutional safeguards Samos may have possessed, they were set aside by Polykrates some little time before the conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. The checks which the Lydian monarchy under Kroisos (Crœsus) had offered to the aggrandisement of local despots had been removed by the fall of that king on the capture of Sardeis by the Persian hosts; and beyond fear of the sovereign who ruled far away at Sousa there was little to repress the ambition of unscrupulous schemers in the Greek cities of Lower Asia or the islands of the Egean.

Usurpation of Polykrates, ? 533 B.C.

Polykrates soon found his brothers in the way. Pantagnotos he therefore murdered: Syloson, the younger, he drove into exile; and then, probably because he was not acquainted with the designs of Cambyses, or possibly before these designs had yet taken shape in the mind of the Persian king, he entered into a close alliance with Amasis, the founder of the last dynasty of Egyptian kings before the Persian conquest. Amasis had shown some Greek leanings by marrying a Greek woman of Kyrênê; and Polykrates could not fail to see the benefit which he might derive from the friendship of a prince under whom Greek merchants in Egypt enjoyed a time of exceptional prosperity.

Alliance of Polykrates with Amasis, king of Egypt

To a Samian tyrant an army without a navy was of very little use; and Polykrates bent his mind wholly to the formation of a fleet. His success, we are told, was surpassed only by that of Minos, the Cretan king, whose exploits belong to the age of Dionysos and Ariadnê, of Theseus and the Minotaur. That the ships of Polykrates became the terror of the neighbouring cities and islands we may well believe. We are assured that they plundered foes and friends alike. He was opposed by no

Naval power of Polykrates

combined action. The men of Lesbos came to the aid of the citizens of Miletos; but their efforts failed, and being carried as prisoners to Samos they were compelled to dig in chains the moat which surrounded the wall of the city.

But the time came when the position of his Egyptian ally became one of great peril; and Polykrates acted towards him with his usual selfishness. The didactic tendencies of a subsequent age reversed the parts played by Polykrates and Amasis, and ascribed the breaking off of the alliance to the latter, because it had become necessary to account for the utter humiliation of the former. Polykrates was, in short, another Kroisos, over whose glory no shadow had fallen. He must therefore experience a catastrophe not less signal; and thus we are told that his unalloyed prosperity became a cause of grief and misgiving to the Egyptian king, who, reminding him of the divine jealousy which had decreed the fall of Kroisos, advised him to inflict some severe pain on himself if none should be sent to him from the gods. 'Seek out,' so he counselled him, 'that thing the loss of which would most deeply grieve thee, and cast it away so that it may never come to mortal hand; and if thereafter thy happiness should still continue unmixed with woe, remedy it in the manner which I have suggested to you.' Having resolved to follow this advice, Polykrates chose out a seal-ring of emerald set in gold, the work of the Samian Theodoros, and then rowing out into the deep sea cast it into the waters. A few days later a fisherman presented him with a fish too splendid to appear on the table of any ordinary citizen; and Polykrates showed his appreciation of the gift by inviting the giver to supper. Before the time for the meal came, the signet ring was found in the body of the fish. Much wondering at this strange incident, Polykrates wrote to Amasis, telling him the whole story. The Egyptian king drew the inevitable inference. Polykrates was doomed; and it was clear that all efforts to save him from the catastrophe were mere waste of time. He therefore sent a herald and broke off the alliance, in order that,

Rupture of the alliance between Polykrates and Amasis

when his ruin came, he himself should not feel grief as for a friend.

Tales such as these may be made to assume a certain look of coherence and plausibility; but although myths climb like parasites round a tree, they generally leave some bit of genuine historical tradition visible, which makes further examination of the myth itself superfluous. It is strange indeed that Herodotos should not see the significance of the next fact which he mentions in the life of Polykrates. In seeming unconsciousness that it completely upsets the didactic story which he has just related, he informs us that, when Cambyses was preparing for his Egyptian expedition, Polykrates wrote proposing to help him; that the offer was eagerly accepted; and that Polykrates sent a naval contingent manned by those citizens of Samos whose fidelity he suspected, forwarding with them a special request that Cambyses would never allow any of them to set foot on Samian soil again.

Traditional and historical accounts of this rupture

It follows that the alliance between Amasis and Polykrates was broken off by the latter: and though it is altogether likely that Polykrates adopted this device for getting rid of persons disaffected to his rule, we can get little or no knowledge from the strange stories told us of these banished men. One of these tales asserts that they advanced no further than the little island of Karpathos: another says they managed to escape from Egypt and returning to Samos were defeated by Polykrates; while a third states that they defeated the tyrant.

Contradictions in the accounts

The sequel brings before us a terrible picture of the lawlessness and violence then generally prevalent. These Samian exiles betook themselves, we are told, to Sparta, where their request for help was made in a speech which the Spartans declared to be so long that they had forgotten the first part of it and failed to understand the rest. On the next day they appeared with an empty sack, and when they remarked that the wallet wanted meal, the Spartans retorted that there was no need to put

Siege of Samos by the Spartans, ? 525 B.C.

their parable into words, as the empty wallet would have told its own story. However this may have been, their request was granted, and a large Spartan force accompanied them and laid siege to Samos. But, if Athenians had as yet little skill in blockade, Spartan incapacity was immeasurably greater (p. 50). After forty days spent to no purpose, they abandoned the task in despair. The exiles thus deserted sailed to the little island of Siphnos, and demanded of the wealthy inhabitants a loan of ten talents. The loan was refused; and the Siphnians, being beaten in a battle, were compelled to pay a hundred talents, with which however the Samians made no attempt to force themselves into their own city. After many wanderings and adventures, they were enslaved by a combined force from Crete and Egina.

Continued prosperity of Polykrates

This episode seems to have involved no break in the continuous prosperity of Polykrates. His power was in fact greater than ever; and it was therefore just at this point that he must, according to the didactic philosophy of the time, fall under the stroke of the divine jealousy which, like the lightning, smites everything that is most exalted. He had made his city, as it is said, the wonder of the world, and he had taken delight in gathering round him, like Peisistratos at Athens, those who had won fame in every branch of art or who had attained renown as poets. The time was thus come at which his own fortunes must exhibit the working of the law by which all human greatness ebbs as well as flows. As at the waving of a wand, we pass, as soon as we reach narratives built up on this idea, from the region of history into that of theology; and we can but give the story as it has come down.

Plot of Oroites for the ruin of Polykrates

The lyric poet Anakreon of Teos was with Polykrates when a herald was introduced bearing a message from Oroites, the Persian satrap of Sardeis. Between the despot and the satrap there had been, we are told, no previous intercourse; nor had the latter received from the former any injury in word or in deed. His message was marked by the deepest humility, and it besought the aid

of Polykrates to deliver him from deadly peril. In reality Oroites was seeking only to entrap the tyrant to his doom. His enmity had been excited, we are told, by a mere spirit of personal rivalry. Sitting before the doors of the king's palace, he was, after the Persian fashion, vaunting his own deeds of valour in times past, when he was silenced by the cutting retort of another Persian named Mitrobates, satrap of Daskyleion. What, he asked, could the bravery of that satrap be, who had failed to secure for the king the island of Samos, a prey so easy that one of the islanders with a train of only fifteen men had made himself the master of it? Without uttering a word in reply to Mitrobates, or reproving him for his iniquitous counsel, Oroites resolved on the destruction of Polykrates, and went about his task with all the effrontery of Persian falsehood. He sent a herald who discharged his errand in the hearing of the poet Anakreon. The message ran thus: 'Thus saith Oroites to Polykrates: I hear that thy mind is set on great things, but that thou hast not money to carry out thy designs. Know then that King Cambyses seeks to slay me. Therefore come and take me away and my money, and keep part of it for thyself, and part of it leave to me. If then thou needest money, I have that which may make thee ruler over all Hellas; and if thou believest not about my wealth, send the trustiest of thy servants, and to him will I show it.'

These words roused, we are told, the greed of Polykrates, who sent his scribe Maiandrios to test the truth of the message. Hearing that the Samian was nigh at hand, Oroites filled eight vessels with stones, and then placing on the stones gold enough to cover them, fastened the vessels and kept them ready. Maiandrios came, saw, and was convinced that the picture drawn by Oroites was a statement of plain unvarnished fact: and in spite of the warnings of his soothsayers, in spite of the pleadings of his daughter, who had seen a vision portending to him disaster and ruin, Polykrates resolved on making the fatal venture. The voyage was made in company with his physician

Murder of Polykrates, ? 522 B.C.

Demokedes, a man who was to play a conspicuous part in the drama of Persian aggressions in Europe, and with many other trusty adherents. The fly was intrapped in the spider's web. Polykrates was impaled by the satrap's orders, and his Samian followers were sent back, with the charge that they would do well to be thankful for having escaped so easily.

There is no reason for doubting that the career of Polykrates ended in a terrible and unforeseen catastrophe. The details of the story are less trustworthy. Oroites addresses Polykrates as though he were at the beginning of his great enterprises, and not as though he had already done wellnigh all that he could fairly hope to do. The device of the jars of stone covered with gold we cannot dismiss as necessarily in itself a fiction, for the same trick is said to have been practised by Hannibal in a Cretan town, and a deception not unlike it was actually played off by the men of Egesta in Sicily upon the Athenians, and seems to have decisively turned the balance of public opinion at Athens in favour of their expedition to that island in the Peloponnesian war. But the story implies that the credulity of Maiandrios vastly exceeded that of the Athenian envoys at Egesta, who saw the same golden and silver vessels reproduced in a series of banquets in different houses. To pry too closely into the contents of the jars would have been to destroy the symmetry of the tale.

Uncertainty of the details in the narrative

The peculiarity of such narratives is seen in their powers of extension. They are never at a loss in drawing moral lessons from any changes in the course of human affairs. Oroites must be dealt with by the same laws which had done their work in the case of Polykrates. Intoxicated with his success, the satrap began to think himself born to greater things. After the death of Cambyses he seems to have taken part with the Magian usurper; or at all events he did no good, we are told, to the Persians during that usurpation or rebellion. Mitrobates, who had set him on against the Samian tyrant, fell a victim now to his cruelty or his ambition; and when Dareios, after the fall of the

Death of Oroites

Magian king, ascended the Persian throne, Oroites bade defiance to the new dynasty by slaying a messenger despatched to him from Sousa. The satrap, however, must be made to feel the power of the King of Kings. Chosen by lot to discharge the perilous errand, a Persian named Bagaios carried to Sardeis a number of letters, to be delivered successively to the scribe of Oroites. The first related to indifferent matters; but when the envoy saw that they were received with all outward signs of reverence by those who surrounded Oroites, he handed to the scribe one which forbade the bystanders to guard the satrap. The soldiers at once lowered their spears; and seeing that he could count upon them, Bagaios took courage and handed to the scribe the last letter, which charged the Persians in Sardeis to slay Oroites. The command was instantly obeyed; and thus far Polykrates was avenged.

Political growth of the Samians

The expulsion of the Peisistratidai from Athens was followed by no convulsions, and it tended largely to foster that desire for political freedom which led to the defeat of Hippias and his Persian allies at Marathon. The course of Samian history after the fall of Polykrates shows us partly that we are dealing with a time for which we have but scanty information, and partly that the Samians possessed few or none of the qualities needed to carry a people onwards on the road to freedom and self-government.

Rejection of the proposal of Maiandrios

On his departure from Samos Polykrates had left as his deputy Maiandrios, whose report lured him to his destruction. On hearing of his master's death, Maiandrios summoned the people, and told them in few words that the power and the resources of Polykrates were all in his hands, and that, if he were pleased so to do, there was nothing which could hinder him from continuing the old tyranny. But as he would not himself do that which he had all along disapproved in his master and must disapprove in any one else, he would lay down this power and take his place among them as a citizen subject to all the laws of the state. A fair opportunity was thus offered for reverting

to the condition of things which Polykrates had on his usurpation, like all other tyrants (p. 41), overthrown; but, to use the words of Herodotos, Maiandrios was not suffered to be just and generous, as he heartily wished to be. His speech was followed by some scurrilous invective from a citizen, who reviled him as a scamp unfit to bear rule and called on him to account for the moneys which had passed through his hands.

Seeing the peril which compliance with such a demand might involve, Maiandrios, it is said, went back to the Akro-
Interference of Syloson, brother of Polykrates
polis, and summoned the chief citizens to appear before him one by one, that he might lay the accounts before them. With a folly equal to that of Polykrates, they fell into the trap and were made prisoners. Maiandrios soon fell sick, and all were slain by his brother Lykaretos. But a new actor now appeared upon the scene in the person of Syloson, the exiled brother (p. 73) of Polykrates.

During his banishment Syloson had spent some time in Egypt, where his scarlet cloak caught the fancy of Dareios.
Syloson and the Persians
Dareios offered to buy it; the Samian, refusing to sell, bestowed it on him as a free gift. Dareios was then simply a Persian noble of one of the seven great houses: but when he was raised to the Persian throne, he still remembered the generosity of Syloson, and when the latter came to Sousa and announced himself as one of the royal benefactors, Dareios asked him how he could show his gratitude. Again refusing all money payments, Syloson asked that he might be made master of Samos, and a Persian fleet accordingly brought him into the harbour. With Maiandrios himself Syloson experienced no difficulty; and the terms on which the tyrant was willing to depart were soon arranged. But Maiandrios had a half-crazed brother who was by no means pleased with what seemed to him a tame and mean surrender of power and privilege; and this man, as soon as the despot had departed, opened the gates, and bursting on the unsuspecting Persians slew many of their chief men before he

could be driven back. In retaliation the Persian commander ordered an indiscriminate massacre. According to this version, which professed to rest on a popular saying, this devastation was wrought for the sake of Sylóson: according to another it was the result of his own tyranny.

Maiandrios at Sparta

Nor was this the end of the series of incidents brought about by the fall of Polykrates. Carrying with him to Sparta a number of vessels filled with gold, Maiandrios placed them before the king Kleomenes, bidding him to take from them all that he might care to have. Kleomenes, vouchsafing no answer to the proposal, simply requested the ephors, the supreme civil magistrates of Sparta, to send the Samian away. The result of this Spartan integrity was that Syloson retained his power for the rest of his life and then handed it on to his son Aiakes, who was put down by Aristagoras of Miletos.

ARISTAGORAS

THE Milesian tyrant Aristagoras is a man who cannot fairly be put into comparison with Polykrates. Of the latter Herodotos speaks as the most magnificent of all the Hellenic despots, unless indeed an exception must be made in favour of those of Sicily. Polykrates succeeded, Aristagoras failed, in everything; but the latter may have been an altogether better man, and he assuredly essayed a vastly harder task. In putting down Aiakes the son of Syloson, he was probably striving to foster the spirit of self-government and self-dependence amongst the Ionians; and he was well aware that unless this spirit could be kindled in the Hellenic cities generally, his cause was virtually lost. He lacked the courage, the ready wit, and the resolute spirit of Polykrates; but his work might have had very different results, if he could have dealt with the elements which he would have found in some at least of the states of Western Hellas.

Position and aims of Aristagoras

If the story of the Scythian expedition rests on any foundations of fact, no greater service was ever done to a Persian king than that which the Milesian Histiaios performed for Dareios, when he resisted the advice of Miltiades (pp. 48, 94) to break up the bridge across the Istros and leave the Persian army to its fate. His warning was that even Miltiades and the tyrants of Greek cities generally would find it a hard, if not an impossible, task to maintain their position without the support of the Persian king; and his counsel commended itself to the large majority. It was not that Histiaios or his

Services of Histiaios to the Persian king

brother tyrants had any abstract wish to make themselves and their people dependent on a foreign despot; but with him, as with the rest, the claims of his order were paramount, and anything was lawful which might save them from falling back into the ranks of ordinary citizens.

Histiaios and Kôês of Mitylênê

Whatever may have been the failures and disasters of the Scythian expedition, Dareios and his generals found themselves complete masters of their movements after recrossing the Danube; and after the fashion of Persian kings he resolved to reward those who had aided in extricating him from great dangers. His benefactors were left free to name the boon which they might wish to receive. The request of Histiaios was that he might be allowed to take up his abode in the Edonian town of Myrkinos, near the mouth of the river Strymon, while the Mitylenaian Kôês desired that he might be established as despot of his native city in the island of Lesbos.

Aggrandisement of Histiaios at Myrkinos

Histiaios, we are told, was not suffered to remain long undisturbed in his new possession. It is difficult sometimes to understand Persian motives and Persian suspicions; and in all narratives which come in any degree from a Persian source it is always difficult to assure ourselves that we have before us the facts as they may really have taken place. According to the tale carried to Dareios by his general Megabazos on his return to Asia, Histiaios was advancing by rapid strides to a power which might become formidable even to the great king. His fortifications were rendering Myrkinos a stronghold from which he might extend his sway over all the surrounding barbarian tribes. Dareios would therefore do well to cut short his schemes before it became impracticable to do so.

Deportation of Histiaios to Sousa

A letter sent to Myrkinos, accordingly, summoned Histiaios to Sardeis, there to confer with the king on matters of importance. He was received by Dareios with the assurance that there is nothing more precious than a wise and kind friend, and that in taking him to Sousa, far away from the scene of his political activity,

his only motive was to avail himself constantly of his experience and his wisdom as a counsellor. But if by removing Histiaios to a distance both from Miletos and from Myrkinos Dareios was getting rid of one danger, he was incurring fresh perils at the hands of others who remained behind. Histiaios had left as his deputy at Miletos his nephew Aristagoras, a man not less unscrupulous but perhaps more farseeing than himself. At the least, he showed no small ability as a schemer, and with greater powers of persistence he might have succeeded in carrying out some of his plans.

Aristagoras and the Naxian exiles

To such a man an opening for action was soon furnished. The islanders of Naxos had a force of 8,000 Hoplites, or heavy-armed troops, together with a large fleet of warships; and they had recently expelled, on what grounds or by what means we cannot say, a large number of the oligarchic or Eupatrid body. These exiles betook themselves to Aristagoras, who was in no way disinclined, under the pretext of helping them, to make himself master of Naxos and of the large group of islands known as the Kuklades (Cyclades) by which it was surrounded. But the Milesian tyrant told them plainly that his own power, without the aid of the satrap Artaphernes, would not suffice for the enterprise. The exiles left it to him to make any terms which he might think good. They were ready not only to reward Aristagoras himself personally but to defray all the costs of the expedition.

Persian approval of the expedition to Naxos

So authorised to make large promises and to hold out a tempting bait, Aristagoras carefully impressed upon Artaphernes that the conquest of Naxos and of the neighbouring islands would be only a stepping stone to the acquisition of Euboia, which would give him the command of the whole line of the Boiotian and Attic coast. For this purpose he asked for a hundred ships. The satrap at once offered to give double that number; and the scheme received the deliberate and full sanction of Dareios.

The armament, thus prepared, made its way to Chios,

with the intention of bearing down upon Naxos with a north wind. But the enterprise, we are told, was doomed to ill luck.

Complete failure of the expedition

The Persian commander Megabates punished the captain of a Myndian ship for not setting a watch on his vessel by night, and bluntly refused the request of Aristagoras for his release. Aristagoras therefore released the man himself, and told Megabates, whose wrath was roused by this interference, that he had been sent to serve as his subordinate, and not to be his master. Without saying a word in reply, Megabates, so the story runs, sent word to the Naxians of the force which was about to attack their island; and before the fleet could reach Naxos, the people were ready to stand a siege. The usual result followed. The blockade was maintained in vain for four months. At the end of that time the money at the command of Megabates and Aristagoras was all spent, and the latter had been led to suspect that the former had designs for expelling him from Miletos. Everything, in short, seemed to point to the wisdom of revolting; and a message received from Histiaios at this crisis confirmed him in his resolution.

Histiaios, we are told, had grown weary of his splendid captivity at Sousa, and longed for what he chose to call his

Aristagoras and the Ionians of Asia Minor

freedom. To secure this, he could think of no better device than that of tattooing a message on the head of one of his slaves, keeping him until his hair was grown over it, and then sending him to Aristagoras with the verbal charge to shave the man's head and look at the skin. The message urged him to bid defiance to the Persian king; and this Aristagoras had already made up his mind to do.

But he had no more intention now of acting by himself than he had before. His purpose was to stir up a general

Efforts to bring about a general revolt

rebellion of all the Ionians of Lower Asia against the Persian king, and to strengthen them by a close alliance with the Ionians of Western Hellas. For some unknown reason he rejected the advice of the logographer Hekataios to secure for the Ionians at any cost

the command of the sea and to lay hands on the treasures of the wealthy temple at Branchidai. Instead of this, he adopted the more questionable plan of arresting all the Hellenic tyrants in the army returning from Naxos, and delivering them to the people of their respective cities. At the same time he made a profession of surrendering his own power at Miletos. Of the despots thus given up only one, Kôês of Mitylene, was punished. His subjects stoned him to death. The rest were all allowed to go free; but Aristagoras felt probably that his purpose of securing a general harmony in the revolt against the Persian king had been attained.

Mission of Aristagoras to Sparta

His next step was to seek help from Sparta, the great Dorian state which was acquiring for itself an informal headship over the whole Hellenic race, and whose supremacy was virtually admitted by Ionians and Dorians alike. Carrying in his hands a brazen tablet on which was engraved a map of the world, he appeared before the Spartan king Kleomenes and urged on him the duty of rescuing the Asiatic Greeks from the slavery of Persian rule. He called him, he said, to no difficult work. The turbaned and trousered Persians the Spartans could easily conquer, and then the whole region from Sardeis to Sousa would be for them one continuous mine of wealth. Surely the securing of such a prize as this must better befit the dignity of Sparta than petty and profitless squabbles with Messenians and Arkadians for a few rugged hills and stony valleys.

Interview between Aristagoras and Kleomenes

His words had clearly made an impression on the dull mind of his hearer, who promised to give a definite answer on the third day. When next they met, Kleomenes asked what the distance might be between Sardeis and Sousa. With fatal candour Aristagoras said that it was a journey of three months. For him the march had no special terrors. He knew that the roads in the Persian Empire were at this time excellent, and the stages of the royal post were no doubt all marked on his map of brass. But for Kleomenes the tidings were decisive;

and Aristagoras was ordered to leave Sparta before sunset. As a last resource, he went with a suppliant's branch to the king's house, where he found him with his daughter Gorgo, the future wife of Leonidas, who fell at Thermopylai.

Attempt of Aristagoras to bribe Kleomenes

To his request that the child, then about eight or nine years old, should be sent away, Kleomenes replied that anything which he had to say might be safely said in her hearing. Aristagoras thereupon entered on the task of bribery. From the offer of ten talents he had risen to the bait of fifty talents, when the little Gorgo broke in with the words, 'Father, if you do not go away, the stranger will corrupt you.' Called back to his sense of duty, Kleomenes abruptly quitted the room, and Aristagoras, compelled to leave Sparta, hurried away to Athens, where, in the words of Herodotos, he found it easier to deceive thirty thousand citizens than one solitary Spartan.

Promise of the Athenians to aid Aristagoras

The Athenians at once promised to aid him with twenty ships. But the historian was mistaken in supposing that they were in any way deceived by the Milesian tyrant or by anyone else. The help of the Persians had already been invoked by the Peisistratids; and the Athenians had been plainly told that they were running into the jaws of destruction if they refused to receive Hippias again as their tyrant. Athens was therefore virtually at war with the Persian king; and in aiding Aristagoras the Athenians were only carrying out a plan of which they must have begun already to count the cost, and which secured to them in the end abundant wealth and a magnificent empire.

Great fire at Sardeis, 499 B.C.

But ill-luck was to be still the portion of Aristagoras. Artaphernes was driven into the Akropolis of Sardeis. The city, a mass of reed-roofed huts, was accidentally set on fire, and the Lydians and Persians rushed in frantic terror into the marketplace. The Athenians hurried away, and under cover of the night embarked on board their ships and sailed away. But the burning of the temple of Kybèbê was afterwards alleged by Xerxes as the reason and the justification of his order for the

destruction of the temples of Western Hellas during his great invasion.

In spite of the mysterious conduct of the Athenians the revolt spread and began to assume formidable proportions. The people of Byzantion and of Cyprus plunged into the rebellion, and their example was followed by the Karians, who showed in their resistance to the Persians a pertinacity and desperation of courage altogether beyond that of any of the genuine Hellenic tribes. While the Ionians underwent defeat after defeat, the Karians in one of the battles which they fought cut off a whole Persian army with three generals at its head.

Extension of the Ionian revolt

But this disaster had no effect on the general issue of the revolt, and Aristagoras, now alarmed for his own safety, suggested to his allies the wisdom of finding a refuge either at Myrkinos or in Sardinia. To this advice Hekataios objected as strongly as he had objected to his previous counsel. With great prudence he suggested that they would do better to fortify themselves in a neighbouring island, and there await an opportunity, which would probably soon offer itself, for forcing their way back into Miletos and so for renewing the struggle. But Aristagoras was no longer in the humour for weighing any counsels opposed to his own. Sailing away to Myrkinos, the old home of Histiaios, he succeeded in gaining possession of the city; but marching afterwards against a Thrakian town, he was defeated by a barbarian army and slain.

Death of Aristagoras, 497 B.C.

Meanwhile the tidings of the Ionian revolt had disquieted the mind of Dareios, who frankly expressed to Histiaios his suspicion that he had something to do with the rising. Histiaios replied that if he had been in Ionia, these things would never have happened: that even now he was not sure that they had happened; and that he pledged himself, if he were sent thither, not merely to put down the rebellion but to add to the Persian Empire Sardinia, which in the vague geographical conceptions of the time he described as the greatest of all islands. But when

Histiaios at Sardeis, 496 B.C.

at Sardeis he entered the presence-chamber of Artaphernes, the satrap greeted him with more startling bluntness. 'It is just this,' he said. 'You stitched the slipper which Aristagoras put on.'

Conscious of the danger threatened under this phrase, Histiaios made the best of his way to Chios, where the people, who had taken him prisoner, let him go, when they found that he was come to fight not for Dareios but against him. His web of intrigue and falsehood was ingeniously spun. The Ionians generally he sought to frighten by telling them that Dareios intended to place them in Phenicia, and to bring the Phenicians to Ionia. To the Persians in Sardeis he sent letters which treated of a plan for revolt already concerted between them and himself. Trying, next, to force his way into Miletos, he received a wound in the thigh. Abandoning this project, he persuaded the Lesbians to man some triremes and sail under his command to Byzantion, where he turned against the Ionians and seized all their ships entering from the Black Sea.

Further operations of Histiaios

On hearing at length that Miletos itself had fallen, he returned to Chios, where he did much damage. But he was now reduced to desperate straits, and making a descent on the mainland opposite Lesbos he began to reap the standing corn for his men, who were now starving. Here he was surprised by a troop of Persian cavalry under Harpagos, and surrendered himself in the hope that he would have no great difficulty in making his peace with Dareios. But Harpagos was resolved that he should have no opportunity. Histiaios was impaled by the order of Artaphernes, and his head was sent to Dareios, who, upbraiding those who had killed him, ordered it to be buried as the head of one who had been a great benefactor to himself and to the Persians.

Capture and death of Histiaios

Such is the traditional story which deals with the acts and policy of two men who largely influenced the great Ionian revolt against Dareios. The revolt itself shows that the Persian yoke was resented as an intolerable burden;

and whatever may have been the weakness and want of cohesion among the Asiatic Ionians, we have here the evidence that they preferred the lot of their western brethren to their own. But it is impossible to believe that in the narrative of the career of Aristagoras and still more of his uncle we have a tale which may be implicitly trusted throughout, and it is equally impossible to suppose that we may reject the story altogether. All then that we can do is to sift it, and to mark those points which are either unlikely or incredible, if we cannot satisfactorily reconstruct the whole history. In dealing with tales which may have come from Persian sources we move among quicksands; and we have also to remember that Ionians would be strongly tempted to ascribe any failures to the evildoing of their Persian allies.

Trustworthiness of the narrative

Hence we may very fairly hold that the Naxians had become aware of impending attack, without believing that a Persian officer, placed in command of this large fleet and distinguished thus far by singular zeal and fidelity in his master's service, became in a moment a deliberate traitor from a mere feeling of pique. The movements of such a force could not possibly be concealed from those against whom they were directed; and this story, like so many others which throw themselves into the form of personal anecdote, is seen to be superfluous. In the camp, according to this tale, the quarrel between Aristagoras and the admiral was notorious: yet no tidings of it came, it would seem, to the ears of Artaphernes, and no inquiry is ordered by him into the causes of a failure which must seriously compromise his position with his master.

History of the Naxian expedition

Not less superfluous, whatever may be said of its other characteristics, is the story of Histiaios. He had done at Myrkinos nothing more than what he had proclaimed his intention to do. He had obtained the sanction of the Persian king to establish himself on the banks of the Strymon, and the building of walls strong enough to resist the attacks of barbarian tribes was

Uncertainty of the story of Histiaios

an indispensable condition for his safety. How even a large increase in the strength of Myrkinos could become a menace to the Persian Empire, it is beyond our power to imagine. But from this point we find ourselves involved in a network of intrigue, falsehood, and wanton treachery, where two facts only seem to call for our acceptance; and these are the transference of Histiaios to Sousa, and his mission to the coast for the purpose of suppressing the revolt. All the details which are given to us of his acts in the interval must have come either from Histiaios himself (and he is represented as a systematic and shameless liar), or from a Persian source which it needs some courage to trust. Had Dareios really suspected him, as we are told that he did, he would never have suffered him to leave Sousa without a guard which would have effectually prevented his escape.

Histiaios and Artaphernes

If, again, Histiaios was guilty, we can scarcely understand his appearing before Artaphernes at all, or that Artaphernes should have allowed him to remain an instant longer at liberty, if it really was his belief that Histiaios had done the stitching of the shoe which Aristagoras had put on. We have also to mark the significant statements that Artaphernes put him to death at Sardeis because he doubted his own ability to establish against him a case sufficiently clear to insure his punishment at Sousa, and that in fact Dareios did not give credit to the charges on which he had been killed, inasmuch as he insisted on his still being looked upon as one of the greatest of his benefactors.

Political schemes of Aristagoras

That the story of the mission of Aristagoras to Sparta has been coloured by the imagination of a later age, there can be very little doubt. His whole address to Kleomenes rests on the practicability of conquering the Persian Empire. The Ionic cities are, it is true, to be delivered from a galling foreign yoke; but this is treated as quite a subordinate matter to the destruction of the power which had imposed this yoke on the Asiatic Greeks. Such a notion might have sprung up in the happier

time during which the Persian tribute gatherers disappeared from the regions bordering on the Egean; but at the time of the Ionic revolt the grave statement of such a scheme must have been regarded as a proof of frantic madness, and if this be so, what becomes of the brazen map exhibited at Sparta by Aristagoras? The Spartans would not have understood it, and they were only terrified and indignant at the lessons which Aristagoras sought to inforce by means of it. In short, the map is as superfluous as the story of the conduct of Megabates in the Naxian expedition.

Withdrawal of the Athenians from Ionia

But unquestionably the most perplexing and mysterious incident in the whole narrative of the Ionian revolt is the sudden retreat and disappearance of the Athenians after the accidental burning of Sardeis. It is of the first consequence, towards a clear understanding of the time, to note that the position of Athens in reference to the Persian king had been definitely fixed by the intrigues of Hippias. The refusal of the Athenians to receive him back as their tyrant had been taken by Artaphernes as a virtual declaration of war (pp. 52, 55). Yet these people, who had boldly disowned the obligations incurred in their name by their own ambassadors, and who never failed when the struggle with Persia had to be carried out on their own soil, are now represented as without the least warning deserting those whom they had solemnly promised to aid, and doing so just at the moment when the prospect before them was most encouraging. Whatever may have been the facts, there seems to be good ground for the suspicion that they have been distorted by the later fancies which exhibited Aristagoras as formally propounding schemes for the overthrow of the Persian Empire.

MILTIADES

MILTIADES defeated the army of the Persian king on the field of Marathon. This fact has made his name more familiar for Englishmen, and perhaps for nearly all the Aryan nations, than that of any other Greek statesman or general. Perhaps on a general survey of his own career no fact could have been more amazing to Miltiades himself than that he should be the instrument for beating back the first great wave of Persian invasion in the mighty enterprise for destroying the liberties of Europe. On the death of his brother Stesagoras, he had been sent by the tyrant Hippias to be governor of the Athenian colony in the Thrakian Chersonesos (p. 48). All his sympathies lay with the Eupatrid order, and there is little room or none for thinking that they ever underwent any change. During his whole life he remained an oligarch: and with a certain amount of modification this may be said of Solon also. But both found themselves committed to a course which could end only in the building up of a strong democracy; and Miltiades, who perhaps least cared to advance it, did the most to insure its supremacy.

Political aims and sympathies of Miltiades

That he had little love for the upstart Athenian Demos, no one probably would dispute; but his personal feelings towards the Peisistratids must have been affected by the murder of his father Kimon, if, as it would seem, this crime was committed by their orders (p. 45). But for the present the work of Miltiades lay far away from Athens, and he was well content to confine himself to the task which demanded his immediate attention, and in this

Murder of Kimon, father of Miltiades

matter he saw that his best course was to ally himself with the people of the land. This he accordingly did by marrying the daughter of the Thrakian chief Oloros (p. 49).

He thus succeeded in placing his power as a tyrant on a firm basis. But he was unable seemingly to run counter to influences which affected his brother despots of eastern Hellas. When the Persian king Dareios resolved to carry out his mysterious Scythian expedition, he was one of the company of Ionian tyrants to whom, by the advice of the Mitylenaian despot Kôês, Dareios intrusted the care of the bridge across the Istros. The order issued by Dareios was that the bridge should be destroyed as soon as all his army had crossed over; but Kôês warned him, that though there might be little danger of defeat in the battlefield, there was no small risk of starvation for so mighty a host in a waterless desert. His second command, issued in accordance with this, was that the Ionians should guard the bridge for sixty days, and if by that time he should not have returned, they should break it up and sail away.

Miltiades at the bridge across the Istros

The expedition was, we are told, a miserable failure. The army could get no water, neither could they come up with their enemies, whom they charged with cowardly flight. 'We are only doing now what we always do,' was, it is said, the Scythian response; 'it is our way to move about. If the Persians want to fight us, let them lay hands on the tombs of our forefathers: and they will soon find out how Scythians can strike.' Dareios soon saw that there was no course open to him but to return to the bridge, which happily for himself he found unbroken. He had, however, very narrowly escaped the danger of almost certain destruction. The Scythians, knowing that the Persian king had resolved on retreat, had taken a shorter road, and hastening to the bridge, urged the Ionians to abandon their trust, because by so doing they would not only free themselves but punish a cruel and wanton invader.

Scythian expedition of Dareios

With the utmost earnestness Miltiades, it is said, urged

that they should follow this advice; and the other despots present called for its acceptance at first with not less eagerness. But their vehemence was cooled, when Histiaios of Miletos warned them that without the help of the Persian king they could not possibly keep their own power; and thus Miltiades, still persisting, stood by himself against eleven tyrants, who may have seen their own real interests with greater clearness than he discerned his own.

Opposition of Miltiades and Histiaios

That some actual facts may lie at the root of the strange narrative of this extraordinary enterprise, we may admit; but for not one single detail in the whole story have we the least evidence. From the moment of the crossing of the Danubian bridge by the Persian army everything is enveloped in impenetrable mist: from the moment after their recrossing it on their retreat all again becomes clear. It was the wish of Dareios that the Thrakians should be made his subjects; and his general Megabazos subdues them, seemingly, with singular ease and success. Miltiades, we are told, returned to the Chersonesos, and remained there until an inroad of the Scythians compelled him to a hurried flight. After a short banishment he was restored by the Dolonkians.

Sequel of the Scythian expedition

The task of tracing completely the course or the causes of events for which we have no contemporary records is in truth next to impossible. If Miltiades fled from his possessions, he must have fled from fear either of the Persians or of the Scythians. But Herodotos tells us expressly that the Scythian inroad did not take place until the third year after the return of the Persians from Scythia. How then should Dareios have allowed Miltiades to remain undisturbed during this interval, if he believed the story of his conduct at the bridge? That he should not have heard of it, is altogether incredible. Hence some modern historians have looked on this story as a pure fiction, fabricated in order to lessen and to get rid of the dislike with which, as a fallen tyrant, Miltiades would be regarded on his return

Miltiades and the Scythians

to Athens; and if Cornelius Nepos represented his flight as immediately following the Scythian expedition, we can only say that he made this statement as the one which would most satisfactorily explain the matter. If we say, as some have said, that Miltiades could not remain in the Chersonesos after giving this advice for destroying the bridge, we are confronted with the assurance of Herodotos that he remained there for two years or more.

Conquest of Lemnos by Miltiades

The inference seems to be that for this portion of the career of Miltiades we have no historical evidence. But there is another story which is supposed to explain the enmity of Dareios for Miltiades, quite apart from the episode at the Istrian bridge. The island of Lemnos, we are told, had been made subject to the Persian king: but when the resources of his empire were being strained to suppress the Ionic revolt of Aristagoras and Histiaios, Miltiades, sailing from Elaious in the Chersonesos, made a descent on the island, which with Skyros remained henceforth closely connected with Athens. Herodotos accepts seemingly as true the tradition which represented the inhabitants of Hephaistiaia as obeying the summons of Miltiades that they should quit the island in compliance with their own promise to depart so soon as a ship should accomplish the voyage between Attica and Lemnos in a single day. The Chersonesos, as ruled by an Athenian, was now, he adds, Attic soil, and Miltiades had landed at Lemnos before the close of the day on which he had sailed from Elaious. The men of Myrina were less pliable; but they were soon brought to surrender, and the island was filled with Athenian settlers.

Date of the conquest of Lemnos

We have seemingly no means of settling the date of this conquest. We can scarcely suppose that Miltiades would have ventured to attack Lemnos before the Ionic revolt, because then the whole Persian power might have been brought to bear upon him. After the revolt had broken out, the capture of the island would be a comparatively easy affair; but then there would be no longer

any need for his flying from the Persians, from whom he had little reason to dread any attack. We may indeed, as some have done, assign his flight from the Chersonesos to the time when the Persian fleet under Harpagos, having taken Miletos, was advancing with victorious course towards the Hellespont. But to bring this incident down to so late a date is to do even greater violence to the declaration of Herodotos that it belongs to the third year after the return of Dareios from Scythia. We find ourselves thus involved again in a network of inextricable difficulties. It is possible that the whole story may have been fabricated by Miltiades himself; and we are scarcely justified in rejecting this hypothesis from any feeling of respect for the personal character of this great general. But in truth speculations about a tradition for which we are unable to adduce any historical evidence must be useless; and we may fairly decline the task as unprofitable.

Escape of Miltiades to Athens, ? 493 B.C.

Whatever judgement we may form of previous events, a clearer light is thrown on the acts and movements of Miltiades after the suppression of the Ionic revolt. During the course of that ill-fated insurrection, he had kept his hold on the Chersonesos. But a serious danger threatened him when the Persians became masters of the forts on the Thrakian march and sacked or burnt Byzantion and other deserted towns. When at length he heard that the Phenician fleet of Dareios was at Tenedos, he felt that he must lose no time in making his escape. Loading five ships with his goods, he set sail for Athens. Off the promontory of Elaious he fell in with the enemy, and with some difficulty made his way with four ships to Imbros and thence to Athens.

History of Metiochos, son of Miltiades

The fifth ship was captured; and his son Metiochos, being on board, was taken prisoner and sent to Dareios. In sending him the Phenicians thought that they were doing the king a service for which they should receive a large reward, as they were placing in his hands the son of the man who had endangered the Persian kingdom

itself on the banks of the Istros. Dareios, however, we are told, not only did him no harm, but gave him a Persian wife with a lavish dowry. If the tale be true, Miltiades became the grandfather of a Persian family; but it would also follow that the narrative of events at the bridge on the Danube is not to be trusted. If Miltiades had done all that he could to insure the destruction of Dareios, the generosity of the latter to Metiochos becomes an act of almost incredible folly.

Trial and acquittal of Miltiades at Athens

How far, during the time which had passed since his departure from Athens at the bidding of Hippias (p. 48), he had outgrown the oligarchical ideas of his earlier years, we can scarcely venture to say. Having escaped one great danger at sea, he reached Athens only to encounter a scarcely less serious danger on land. The Athenians looked on him as a tyrant, and Miltiades was called to account for the exercise of his tyranny in the Chersonesos. The case was, to say the least, a difficult one: and the trial ended in his acquittal.

Election of Miltiades as Strategos

His conduct at this time may have convinced his countrymen that he might be depended upon to maintain the Solonian constitution as reformed and developed by Kleisthenes; and this might be a better reason for electing him Strategos, or general, when it became known that the efforts of Hippias had at last succeeded in precipitating the Persian power on the shores of Attica, than could have been furnished by the reputation which he had gained by the conquest of Lemnos.

Plans of the Persian king

The Athenians could, indeed, no longer doubt that the Persian king had resolved to put forth his full strength on the great enterprise which, if successful, would insure the inslavement not of Athens only but of Europe. Events which had already happened were evidence that even serious disasters could not make him abandon his purpose. The great fleet of Mardonios, the king's son in law, had been dashed during a terrific storm on the iron-bound coast of Athos, and twenty thousand men, it is said, were killed by the force of the waves dashing them against the rocks or by

the sharks which abounded in this part of the sea. This catastrophe had only made Dareios more resolute in testing the disposition of the Greek cities towards himself and his designs.

Demands for earth and water, 491 B.C.

In all likelihood it was Hippias who now suggested that the way for the subjugation of Hellas would be best cleared by ascertaining how many of the insular and continental Greek cities might be willing to inrol themselves amongst the number of his slaves. Heralds were therefore sent, we are told, to all the Greek cities, with the demand that they should give to the king a little earth and a little water,—in other words, that they should confess absolute submission to his will; and the summons was obeyed, we are told, by the people of all the islands visited by the heralds. It was obeyed also in all likelihood by those continental cities which we find afterwards among the allies of Xerxes.

In the number of those who thus betrayed or abandoned the common Hellenic cause were the Eginetans; and Athenian ambassadors appeared at Sparta with a definite accusation against them. They had acted treacherously, the Athenians urged, not towards any Greek city in particular but to all who bore the Greek name. The terms of the charge show not merely the growth of a collective popular sentiment, but that Sparta was recognised as in some sort the head of this informal confederacy. The embassy was followed by prompt and combined action on the part of the Spartans and Athenians; and this joint action, it has been thought, is explained only by the alleged treatment of the Persian heralds when they came first to Athens and then to Sparta, asking for earth and water. The story goes that in spite of the acknowledged inviolability of heralds they were thrown at Athens into the Barathron, a chasm into which the bodies of criminals were cast, and at Sparta into a well, with the bidding to get thence the earth and water which they wished to carry to the king.

Alleged ill-treatment of the Persian heralds at Athens and at Sparta

It is a strange and unlikely tale. The ill-treatment of

heralds was a crime not congenial to the Greek character in any age. In the eyes of Athenians and Spartans it was a crime especially heinous; and the subsequent conduct of the Spartans is not at all in accordance with this sudden outburst of unreasoning vehemence. It would seem indeed that Xerxes, when in his turn he sent his heralds to the Hellenic cities, excepted Athens and Sparta from the number of those to whom he offered his mercy, on the very ground that they had violated the sanctity of the herald's office in the persons of the messengers of Dareios; and it is also true that another strange story is related of the mode in which the Spartans sought to free themselves from the guilt of this crime. They felt themselves to be lying under the wrath of Talthybios, the herald of Agamemnon in the time of the Trojan war; and two citizens named Sperthias and Boulis offered to make atonement for it with their blood. They were therefore sent to the Persian king; but although they were ready to die, they were not ready to throw themselves into the attitudes of Persian adoration, and therefore when they were introduced into his presence they withstood those who wished to shove their faces in the dust. Not to be surpassed by them in magnanimity, the king sent them away unhurt.

Unlikelihood of the story

The story is suspicious from whatever point of view we may look at it. From Herodotos all that we can gather is that the dispatching of Sperthias and Boulis to the Persian court took place long after the violation of the heralds; but we happen to know that Nikolaos, the son of Boulis, and Aneristos, the son of Sperthias, were the Spartan envoys who were seized on their way to the Persian king, in the second year of the Peloponnesian war, by the Thrakian prince Sitalkes, and by him handed over to the Athenians. This latter circumstance does not indeed prove, though it renders it not unlikely, that the anecdote about Sperthias and Boulis was of late growth; but we have to note that the political results would be precisely the same whether Spartans and Athenians killed the heralds

Probable late growth of the narrative

or whether they were saved from this crime by not having any envoys to kill.

The question therefore turns on the degree of likelihood that Persian messengers should be sent to either of these cities; and to say the least it is not likely that any would be sent to the Spartans, who had already provoked the anger of the Persian king by strongly espousing the cause of Kroisos (Crœsus), and by sending an imperious order for which Cyrus told them that they should smart. As to the Athenians, they had already twice put themselves out of the king's grace, once by repudiating the covenant which their envoys had made with him (p. 52), and again by refusing to comply with the order of Artaphernes that they should receive Hippias again as their tyrant (p. 55). The satrap had indeed told them plainly that he regarded their refusal as virtually a declaration of war; and we can scarcely suppose that a message sent afterwards to those with whom the king had not come into conflict would be addressed to others who were already his open and avowed enemies. It is perhaps enough to say that if these two cities were exempted from the number of those who were invited to acknowledge the supremacy of Persia, they would be as much constrained to make common cause with each other as if they had ill-treated or killed Persian heralds.

Position of Sparta and Athens in reference to the Persian king

But the procrastination and indifference which the Spartans for the most part showed in the struggle go far to prove that they by no means regarded themselves as having incurred any special danger by provocations personally offered to the Persian monarch. The return of the Athenian settlers from Euboia was a plain warning that no time was to be lost in resisting the invasion of Datis and Artaphernes; and the Athenians on their part were ready to march to the field of battle under Miltiades and their other generals. But to meet the enemy without any strength beyond their own seemed to them an impossible task; and they felt bound therefore to beseech the Spartans to be prompt in bringing forward their own forces. We

Alleged procrastination of the Spartans

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may accept or we may reject the marvellous story that the runner Pheidippides accomplished the journey between Athens and Sparta, a distance of not less than 150 miles, on the day after leaving the former city. No feats of Persian or Indian runners will bear comparison with such an exploit as this: but Pheidippides may have started sooner or spent a longer time on the road than the tale allows, and debate on such a subject answers no good purpose. The main point of the story is that his mission was fruitless. The Spartans received with unmoved countenances the tidings that Eretria had fallen and that its people were inslaved. Their only answer was that they must follow the traditions of their forefathers, and that they could not move until the moon became full.

The Athenians therefore had to march without any help from Sparta to Marathon, which the Persians had chosen, we are told, as the ground for deciding the quarrel. But on reaching the battlefield they were joined by the full military force of Plataia. This little Boiotian city had made an alliance with Athens twenty years earlier, under circumstances which boded ill for its consequences. The Spartan Kleomenes on suggesting the arrangement looked on it as simply transferring from Sparta to Athens an annoyance which might lead, as he hoped, to a series of wars between the latter city and the Theban confederacy. It became one of the causes which led to a strife on a mightier scale and involved the destruction of the faithful ally of Athens. But for the present both Athenians and Plataians were animated by the full flame of disinterested enthusiasm. The generals alone seemed unable to adopt a decided line of action.

The Athenians and the Plataians at Marathon

If we may follow a story which it is impossible to accept in all its details, some or many of these being self-contradictory, Miltiades with four of the generals was anxious for immediate battle, and appealed with the utmost earnestness to the Polemarch Kallimachos to give his casting vote against the five generals who wished to postpone it. It depended on the Polemarch,

Miltiades and the Polemarch Kallimachos

he said, not only whether Athens should be the first city in Hellas, but whether Hellas should even be free. Kallimachos, it is said, did as Miltiades wished: but to our surprise we find that the battle is not fought. The four generals who sided with Miltiades handed over to him the presidency which came to each in turn; but Miltiades nevertheless would give no order for battle until his own turn had come.

If all this took place at Marathon, the course of events seems very strange. So long as the army remained there, they were depriving the city of its chief military force; yet according to the story they allow nearly a week to pass before they take any step to bring matters to an issue, although Miltiades had at the outset protested against delay as nothing less than frantic folly. They could not possibly be unaware that, while they remained at Marathon, the enemy had it in their power to detach an overwhelming force from their mighty host and send it round Cape Sounion against the city, which in this case must almost inevitably have been taken. If we follow the narrative of Herodotos, this difficulty is insuperable. It is, of course, at once removed, if we adopt the version of Cornelius Nepos that the debates of the generals took place not at Marathon but at Athens. If they were to be idle at all, we may be sure that Miltiades would have preferred to be idle within the walls of the city, which they would thus at the least be guarding with all their forces. The temptation to accept the statement of Nepos is strong; but we can find no historical authority for it. We have a choice of many suppositions: but after all, the fact remains, so far as we can see, that the true account of the debates between the Athenian generals has been lost or perhaps never was written.

Hesitation and debates of the generals

Nor are we altogether on sure ground when we come to the battle itself. It was fought, we know, in the broad plain which by the lower road between Hymettos and Pentelikos is distant about twenty-five miles from Athens. At either end of this plain was a marsh, the northern one being still at all seasons of the year impassable,

The plain of Marathon

while the smaller one to the south was almost dry during the summer; and although the vines and olives of Marathon have not lacked a poet to sing their praises, the bareness of the plain at the present day would lead us to suppose that they must have grown on the slopes which descended to the plain rather than on the plain itself.

Arrangements of the Athenians

On this broad and level surface between the hills which rose around them and the firm sandy beach on which the Persians were drawn up to receive them, stood, in the simple story of Herodotos, the Athenian tribes, not the four exclusive societies of the old Eupatrid days, but the ten Kleisthenean tribes which had for ever displaced them (p. 63). By the privilege still attached to his office, Kallimachos, the Polemarch Archon, headed the right wing; the Plataians stood on the left. But as with their scanty numbers it was still necessary to present a front equal to that of the Persian host, the middle part of their army was only a few men deep and was very weak, while the wings were comparatively strong. At length all was ready: and, the signs from the victims being declared good, the Athenians began the onset and went running towards the barbarians, the space between the two armies being not less than a mile. The Persians on seeing them coming made ready to receive them, at the same time thinking the Athenians mad, because, being so few in number, they came on furiously without either bows or horses.

Later mistakes about the battle

On coming to close quarters with the barbarians the Athenians fought well, being, as Herodotos tells us, the first of the Greeks who endured the sight of the Median dress, for up to this time the Greeks had dreaded even to hear their name. This bewildering and astonishing statement from a historian living only about two generations after the events which he is relating shows how deeply a false impression may be imbedded on the mind, when the event treated of is regarded as of supreme importance. The battle of Marathon was the great crisis in the history not of Greece only but of Europe; and here, Hero-

dotos felt assured, the spell of Persian supremacy was broken. The Athenians therefore would be the first who faced the Persian host without flinching. The statement, if we keep only to the narrative of Herodotos himself, is utterly untrue. The Ionian revolt under Aristagoras of Miletos (p. 88) had been a luckless enterprise; but with a pitiable lack of cohesion and very indifferent generalship there had been not a little of even desperate bravery, a large Persian army under three generals having been completely destroyed in a single battle in Karia.

With emphatic simplicity the historian goes on to tell us that the two armies fought for a long time in Marathon, the barbarians being victorious in the middle and driving the broken centre of the Athenians back upon the plain. Closing on the enemy which had thus broken their centre, the Athenians and Plataians, who had the best of the fight on each wing, succeeded in beating off their opponents. The Persians were now in full flight; and the Greeks, slaughtering them in the pursuit until they reached the sea, tried to set their ships on fire. In this struggle fell the Polemarch Kallimachos, with Stesilaos, one of the generals, and Kynegeiros, the brother of the great tragic poet Æschylus. Kynegeiros, it is said, had his hand cut off when he had seized the stern-ornament of one of the Persian ships. In this way the Athenians took seven ships: with the rest the barbarians beat out to sea, and sailed round Sounion, wishing to reach the city before the Athenians could return to it. But the Athenians hurried back with all speed and reached Athens first. The barbarians lay for a while with their ships off Phaleron, which at that time was the port of Athens, and then sailed back to Asia.

Incidents and results of the battle

The Spartans set out, Herodotos tells us, when the moon was full, reaching Attica on the third day after they left Sparta—a feat which, for a large force, is more astounding even than the exploit of Pheidippides (p. 102); but although they were too late for the battle, they still wished to look upon the Medes. So they

The Spartans and the battle of Marathon

went to Marathon and saw them, and having praised the Athenians for all that they had done, went home again.

As to the Persian king, he had been bitter enough against the Athenians because they had taken Sardeis; but the tale of the battle of Marathon filled him with so fierce a rage, that he ordered preparations on a vastly larger scale for an invasion which it should be impossible for any earthly power to withstand. For three years the whole empire was astir; but then came the revolt of Egypt; and not many months later Dareios himself died, without being able to chastise either the Egyptians or the Athenians, and leaving both these tasks to his son Xerxes.

Death of Dareios

This is the epical, or rather the religious, form, into which Herodotos has thrown a history, the splendour of which can never be diminished. The great question of freedom or tyranny for Europe generally was settled on the field of Marathon, for it cannot be doubted that this battle decided the issue of the subsequent invasion of Xerxes; and the glory of this victory belonged altogether to the men of Athens and of the little Boiotian town of Plataia. The actual numbers engaged on either side, the precise positions of the combatants, and the exact tactics of the fight are by comparison points of very secondary importance. The story relates to a time for which we have confessedly no contemporary narrative, and it has its full tale of marvels as well as of difficulties wholly unconnected with what are termed supernatural causes. The old heroes of the land rise to mingle in the strife, while living men do battle with superhuman strength and courage. According to the traditional accounts no cavalry took part in the struggle; but every night from that time forth might be heard the neighing of phantom horses and the clashing of swords and spears; and the peasants would have it that the man who went to listen from mere prying curiosity would get no good, while the Daimones bore no grudge against the wayfarer who might find himself accidentally belated in the field.

Traditional accounts of the fight at Marathon

No other alternative is open to us than to look at the traditions of the battle in all their details, and see how far they yield us a clear and coherent narrative. The march of Miltiades and his colleagues from Athens and their victorious return are indisputable facts. The only question is as to the interval of time which separates these two events; and this is a question of extreme importance. We are told on the one side that some four days, or more, passed after the arrival of the Athenians at Marathon before Miltiades issued orders for the fight. On the other hand we are told that the adherents of Hippias in Athens had agreed with their former master to raise a white shield on some conspicuous point, probably on the summit of mount Pentelikos, as the signal that the Persians should at once begin an attack on the city, which they would second to the best of their power. Herodotos further assures us that this shield was actually raised, and he insists on this fact as lying beyond dispute, although he allows that everything else connected with it is utterly uncertain, with the exception of one most important circumstance, namely, that it was raised when the Persians were already in their ships after their defeat,—in other words, that it was raised too late.

The raising of the white shield

We cannot then doubt that the intention of the traitors was to give the sign before any battle could be fought, and in all likelihood to prevent the fighting of any battle at Marathon. Hence the plan arranged by them would be simply this, that the signal should be made so soon as the Athenian army had left the gates of the city, that it should be exhibited from a point at which it should not be seen by the Athenians on their march, and that, as soon as it should be exhibited, the real attack of the Persians should be made on the defenceless city, while at Marathon sufficient forces should remain to keep the Athenians on the ground until the work at Athens should be completed.

Purpose of the signal

A simpler and a wiser plan could, as we have already said, scarcely have been formed; but its success depended entirely on the punctuality of its execution, and it was

precisely on this point that the plan was wrecked. If, as we seem forced to conclude, the debates and the delay of the Athenian generals belong to the time which preceded the beginning of the march, it follows that Miltiades left the city with the fixed purpose of fighting an immediate battle and of returning as soon as might be possible. Probably not forty-eight hours passed from the moment of his leaving the gates to the time of his re-entering them. That he or his men saw the white shield, we are not expressly told; but the delay in raising it might allow the Athenian army to reach a spot from which it might become visible to them, and this might urge them to even greater speed, although it may have produced a different result.

Causes of the failure of the plan

If the debates of the Athenian generals took place at Athens, we may safely infer that they did not leave the city until they felt that the moment had come for rapid and decisive action. Their long-continued hesitation may have arisen from the consciousness that the partisans of Hippias were intriguing and plotting for the restoration of their master and the success of his allies; and when at length they made up their mind to leave the city, they must have done so because they felt that they must at all hazards confront the Persian host which still lay encamped at Marathon. The inference is that they were not unaware of the conspiracy, and therefore that the sight of the white shield would not come upon them altogether as a surprise. Before they saw it, they may have been far advanced on the road, and the battle must have begun before the Persians appointed to go round to Phaleron could by any possibility reach it. We may take at its worth, whatever it be, the conjecture that the Athenian assault at Marathon took place when all the Persian cavalry and a large portion of the Persian infantry were on board the ships which were to convey them to Phaleron for the attack on the city.

Reasons for the hesitation of the generals

In this case the Peisistratid conspiracy was productive only of disaster to the cause of Hippias, for it so far weakened

the Persian army as to render possible its defeat by the Athenians under Miltiades. The forces embarked in the ships had not time to surprise Athens; and the forces left were insufficient to withstand the Athenian onset and tactics at Marathon. But on any supposition the idea of long-continued inaction on the field becomes untenable. The only object for raising the white shield was to warn the Persians that the Athenians had left the city. The act would have been superfluous and ridiculous, when they could actually see the Athenians drawn out in array in front of them. They would know at once that the conditions which they had been most anxious to bring about were actually realised, and the inaction of the Athenians would thus have insured the success of the plot for restoring the Peisistratidai. The idea that the Persian leaders would allow a handful of men to make them stand at bay for days together, unless they had a motive for so doing, cannot be entertained for a moment. Their business was to do their master's bidding with the least waste of time; and the story of their recent actions at Naxos and Eretria would certainly not warrant the notion that they would stand looking idly on until it pleased the Athenians to advance to the attack.

Failure of the plans of Hippias and his partisans

The emphatic assertion of Herodotos that beyond the fact of the raising of the shield he knew nothing of the business, would of itself show that he did not believe the charge which ascribed the act to the Alkmaionidai. But he dismisses the accusation with vehement scorn. Kylon (p. 13) may have been harshly and unfairly dealt with, although this must remain a matter of opinion merely: but to the Alkmaionidai the Athenians owed almost their very existence. By them they had been freed, it may be by not the most scrupulous means, from the yoke of Hippias, while to Kleisthenes they were indebted for those changes and developments of the Solonian constitution which rendered it an effectual safeguard against the machinations of the partisans of Hippias. Herodotos refers indeed to the popular sentiment about Harmodios and

Charges brought against the Alkmaionidai

Aristogeiton; but he does so only to treat it with contempt. All that they had done was to exasperate the kinsfolk of Hipparchos, whereas the Alkmaionidai had shown, throughout, the patriotism which renders all attempts at corruption and intimidation impracticable, and which Herodotos compares to that of Kallias, who bought at auction the property which Hippias left behind him when he went into exile. The story may be true; but it suggests a comparison with the auction of the goods of the Etruscan king Porsenna in the Roman forum, and the selling of the ground in Rome on which the troops for Spain were incamped while Hannibal lay in front of the city.

The hopes of Hippias had been finally dissipated by the victory of his old friend. That friend was now the most distinguished of all Athenian citizens. He had won for himself an imperishable name in the great battle in which Æschylus fought by the side of his brother Kynegeiros, and which was afterwards depicted on the Poikilê or Beautiful Porch at Athens. He had returned to Athens with a reputation greatly raised by his conquest of Lemnos. He had now attained a preeminence such as no Athenian had reached before him; and he seems to have been somewhat dizzied by the height on which he stood. The winning of the great battle had left him with the conviction that in smaller enterprises success might be regarded as certain; and with this was joined the further conviction that he might absolutely trust his own judgement. Strong in this assurance, he appeared before the people, and told them that, if they would follow his guidance, he would make them rich for ever. Of the nature of the enterprise in which he wished to engage them, he would say nothing. All that he asked was whether they would furnish ships, money, and men for an expedition as to which he would enter into no details.

Greatness of Miltiades, and its consequences

The Athenians also, we must suppose, had had their heads a little turned by their recent success, and perhaps still more by their sudden deliverance from overwhelming anxiety. Six and forty nations, it is said, had faced them on the field of Marathon; but the black cloud

The expedition to Paros

which thus threatened their country had been broken and scattered seemingly for ever. Surely they could go on now in the assurance of achieving whatever task they might take in hand; and so far as we may see, they never stopped to think that a state or nation cannot transfer its responsibility to any individual man, however much they may look on him as deserving implicit confidence. The people at once did what Miltiades asked: and Miltiades, sailing to Paros, an island lying a few miles to the west of Naxos, laid siege to the city, threatening to destroy it unless they paid forthwith the sum of one hundred talents. His ostensible reason for making this crushing demand was that the Parians had furnished a ship for the Persian fleet at Marathon; but Herodotos believed that he was really actuated by a personal grudge against a Parian named Lysagoras for slandering him to the Persian general Hydarnes. The explanation seems, to say the least, strange. The slander, if there was any slander, would scarcely deserve his notice, and after his great victory he might look upon it with satisfaction, if not with pride.

Siege of Paros

But if he counted on the wealth of Lysagoras and his fellow-citizens, he was to be disappointed. The Parians had not the means for making the payment. Putting Miltiades off from day to day under various pretences, they so strengthened their walls by working at night as to be enabled soon to set him at defiance. In the stage then reached by military art and skill the balance of success inclined greatly in favour of the besieged; and after a blockade of six and twenty days Miltiades was compelled to return to Athens, having utterly failed in his enterprise, and having severely strained his thigh or his knee.

Failure of the expedition

This injury the Parians accounted for by saying that Miltiades, perplexed and irritated by the prolongation of the blockade, entered into a treaty with Timo, a priestess of the Chthonian, or infernal, gods, who assured him of victory if he would follow her counsels; but to do this it was necessary to see her in person. He therefore went up to the hill in front of the town, and

being unable to open the gate, leaped the hedge of the Temenos, or sacred ground, of Demeter. On reaching the doors of the temple he lost his presence of mind altogether, and rushing back in deadly fright hurt his thigh as he jumped from the stone fence. For the treachery thus contemplated the Parians wished to put Timo to death; but the Delphian god, whose sanction they asked, told them that she was only a servant in the hands of the fate which was hurrying Miltiades to his doom.

Trial and condemnation of Miltiades

The victor of Marathon returned to Athens, only to find himself the object of a general indignation, which expressed itself by a capital charge brought against him by Xanthippos (the father of the great Perikles), who by his marriage with Agaristê, the grand-daughter of the Sikyonian Kleisthenes, was connected with the Alkmaionidai (p. 60). Unable to walk or even to speak, Miltiades was carried on a bed into the presence of his judges, before whom his friends made the best defence or offered the best excuses that they could. The charge was one which could not be rebutted directly, and before a court of democratic judges they could not with prudence venture to urge that in being misled the people were really the greater offenders. But if an acquittal might not be hoped for, the penalty might be mitigated; and thus we learn that the suit against Miltiades was what was called an Agôn Timêtos, or a trial for an offence for which the punishment was not definitely fixed by the law. His friends pleaded that a fine of fifty talents would probably cover the expenses of the expedition from which they had hoped to reap unbounded wealth; and this penalty was inflicted on the man but for whom Athens might perhaps have been at that moment the seat of a Persian satrapy.

In a similar suit Sokrates brought on himself the death penalty by declaring that the proper recompense for his career would be a public maintenance during life in the Prytaneion, or chamber for the entertainment of guests honoured by the state. Had this claim been made for Miltiades, it would have been followed probably by

Death of Miltiades, 489 B.C.

the same result; and the death which the mortification of his thigh or knee brought on him a few hours or a few days later, would not less effectually than the hemlock-juice have left his son Kimon free from the heavy burden which the Athenians suffered him to discharge. Miltiades died in disgrace, and the citizens whom he wished to enrich recovered from his family half the sum which he failed to exact from the Parians. But the silence of Herodotos is a strong argument against the statements of Cornelius Nepos and Plutarch that he was put into prison and died there; and the words of the geographer Pausanias might almost warrant the belief that his ashes were laid in the tomb raised to his memory at Marathon.

The catastrophe which closed the career of this great general has given rise to a long conflict of opinion. On the one side we have a statesman who insists on his countrymen following him in an enterprise of the nature of which they are said to be profoundly ignorant; but this statesman is one to whom they owe a debt of the deepest gratitude. On the other, we have a body of citizens who are thus lured into an unprofitable, if not a disastrous, undertaking; but they make themselves partakers of his guilt or his folly by their own deliberate act. These charges of fraud and deception on the one hand, and of fickleness, levity, and ingratitude on the other have been placed in the scales of a balance which is made to incline in accordance with the political prepossessions of the judge. The impulse to side with an individual against an aggregate of citizens is both general and strong, but the fact nevertheless remains that the greatest services can confer no title on any one to break the law. It follows that the winning of the victory at Marathon could not justify Miltiades in leading his countrymen blindfolded into ruin.

Lack of justification for the conduct of Miltiades

It is also almost beyond dispute that levity and ingratitude are not the besetting sins of democracies generally; and the Demos of Athens might far more reasonably be charged with faults of a precisely opposite nature. Again and again the

Athenians brought upon themselves grave, and in some instances irremediable, disasters, because, in spite of evidence pointing to incapacity or demerit, they refused to withdraw the confidence bestowed on men who had won for themselves a fair reputation for integrity. There were, in truth, many cases in which they retained in office from this feeling men whom it was at once their interest and duty forthwith to dismiss. But when the current of opinion in a democracy is really changed, the change is likely to be avowed in vehement tones and angry language; and such language may be taken as evidence of ingratitude, when the offender (real or supposed) is a man eminent for former services. At Athens, assuredly, the dangerous tendency was rather to an uncriticising and excessive submission to the will of the popular leaders.

Alleged ingratitude of the Athenians

But it is also true that the Athenians in many instances displayed a disposition to shrink from responsibility, which was by no means creditable to them; and in the same measure they were reluctant to take to themselves any blame for results to which they had deliberately contributed. We shall find them hereafter condemning their generals or their statesmen for the result of their own verdict or of undertakings to which they had given their well-considered sanction. In these later instances they knew indeed what the enterprise was to which they were committing themselves; in the case of Miltiades they are represented as knowing nothing about it. Still, whatever may have been the hopes and the enthusiasm of Miltiades, it must be allowed that no state or people can, under any circumstances, be justified in engaging the strength of the country in enterprises with the nature of which they have not been made acquainted. The English would have been no more justified in so following the Duke of Wellington after the battle of Waterloo; and if they had so followed him, the fault in case of failure would have been quite as much theirs as his.

Athenian disposition to avoid responsibility

In short, the Athenians do not come off with clean hands

in the business; and a careful examination of the story seems to show that their ignorance was rather a veil thrown over a line of action which, as being unsuccessful, they were disposed to regard as discreditable, and that in the scheme itself they were rather the accomplices than the dupes of Miltiades. We shall find Themistokles making, a few years later, a similar attempt; but that attempt was successful, and it was accepted eagerly as the earnest of a wide imperial sway for Athens in the future.

Probable complicity of the Athenians in the designs of Miltiades

No one, indeed, can suppose that the whole plan of Miltiades was confined to the expedition to Paros and the paltry demand of a hundred talents. Such a sum would scarcely have enriched a hundred Athenians, far less have rendered them all wealthy. There can be no doubt that the scheme which Miltiades had in his mind was the same as that which Themistokles actually carried out after the battle of Salamis, and that Paros was merely the first island on which the attempt was made. In short, Miltiades was going on an expedition by which he thought to increase the revenue and to establish the naval supremacy of Athens. It is not easy, therefore, to think that the Athenians were quite so ignorant of the object of his errand as they pretended to be, or at the least as they are said to have been; but when they chose to say that they had been led blindfolded into the plan, it was clearly dangerous for Miltiades or his friends to contradict them on a point on which they could not but be very sore. Regarded thus, the case of Miltiades is not altogether unlike that of Sir Walter Raleigh.

Real plans of Miltiades

ARISTEIDES

ARISTEIDES, the son of Lysimachos, is known pre-eminently as the rival of Themistokles. But it is a mistake to suppose that their relations through life were those of mere antagonism. They represented severally two very different conditions of thought; but it has been universally admitted that on the part of Aristeides at least there was no disposition to run any theory to extremes, while there was further a constant readiness to learn the new lessons which the altered circumstances of the time might suggest or inforce. It is on this account that we may do well to consider his career separately, although, when we come to deal with Themistokles, we shall find that the same readiness to learn was combined in the latter with a not less earnest desire to promote the good of his country, and with a far deeper insight into the character of the measures which the interests of his country required.

Relations of Aristeides with Themistokles

But from the outset it was perfectly clear that the party to which Aristeides belonged and which claimed him as their special champion would take ample care of his reputation, while they would do their best to depreciate and perhaps to ruin that of the man whom they looked upon as simply his opponent. Towards the achievement of this purpose their power and their opportunities were undoubtedly great. They belonged to an exclusive and privileged order, and such literature as then existed had grown up under their protection or their patronage. The public records and documents were all virtually in their hands; and a tradition shaped by them had a far better

Eupatrid care for the reputation of Aristeides

chance of permanence than the floating fancies of the common herd, who had not yet learnt to appreciate their own power and importance in the state. It was certain, therefore, that the man who set himself to improve the condition of those who were despised as rabble would receive but scant indulgence at their hands, while another who, like Aristeides, never denied his attachment to the dominant order in the state, would be judged both leniently and partially.

Aristeides, however, deserves all the credit due to a citizen who carries reforms distasteful to the great Eupatrid families, these reforms relating in some instances to matters on which the future greatness of Athens mainly depended. It was not, indeed, likely that he would see the need of these reforms at the outset of his career. At no time of his life had he much liking for the nautic rabble, who were most of all eager in demanding and pushing on democratic changes; and before the invasion of Xerxes it was impossible for him to know how great a part these men would play in the deliverance of Athens and of Europe from Persian slavery. In his earlier years he would therefore appear to Themistokles only as a man who was opposed, and beyond doubt conscientiously opposed, to what in his eyes were the real interests of Athens.

Reforms of Aristeides

The two rivals fought together at Marathon. Aristeides commanded the men of his own tribe, and was left in charge of the spoil when Miltiades hurried back from the battlefield to disconcert the intrigues of Hippias with traitors within the city (p. 107). In the following year he was chosen as one of the archons; and this fact proves that, whatever may have been his poverty later on, he belonged at this time to the wealthiest class of Athenian citizens according to the timocratic constitution of Solon (p. 23).

Aristeides at Marathon. His archonship, B.C. 489

Six years now passed away without any very startling incidents; but the tedious and uninteresting feud or struggle between Athens and Aigina convinced Themistokles, as it failed to convince Aristeides, that in neglecting her navy

Athens was committing herself to a suicidal policy. The Athenians had friends in the city of Aigina (Egina) who were ready to aid them in the conquest of the island; but they came just a day too late. They had no fleet which they could venture to oppose to the Aiginetan navy, and time was lost in bargaining with the Corinthians for a sufficient number of ships.

Quarrel between Athens and Aigina

That Athens should be thus dependent on another, and that a Dorian city, for the means of fighting her own battles was for Themistokles an intolerable humiliation. He had, and he could have, no moral doubt that the attempt defeated at Marathon would be repeated on a larger scale—how soon it was impossible to say. But there is no reason for supposing that the misgivings and anxieties of Themistokles were shared by Aristeides; and if they were not shared by him, the two statesmen would indeed be separated by an impassable gulf. But both exercised a wide influence, and under the present political conditions at Athens their antagonism might involve serious danger to the state. The crisis was one which seemed to call for the Kleisthenean remedy of ostracism (p. 68); and the votes, being taken, showed that the majority of the Athenians desired the banishment of Aristeides. (B.C. 482.)

Ostracism of Aristeides, B.C. 482

That their decision turned on his opposition to the maritime policy of Themistokles there can be no question. Aristeides was, it is said, conspicuous for a virtue which Greek statesmen have for the most part signally and fatally lacked. Bribes had for him no temptation; and he was therefore known emphatically as the Righteous or the Just. But that a man should be driven to exile, as some have supposed that Aristeides was driven, because he was free from a prevalent vice seems unlikely. The ascription of this epithet to any one man exclusively implies the corruption of the leading citizens generally; and therefore it would be comparatively easy for Aristeides to gain the reputation of which the rustic, who asked him to write the name of Aristeides on the sherd or shell, professed

Causes for this ostracism

himself so tired of hearing. More has been made of this slight incident than it deserved. His integrity would undoubtedly attract the main body of the people to a man who had been the friend of Kleisthenes; but not much weight can be attached to the praises of the Rhodian poet Timokreon, who extolled the righteousness of Aristeides in order that he might hold up to public contempt the falsehood and ingratitude of his rival. Timokreon was an exile from the town of Ialysos, and he asserted that Themistokles had deliberately broken, or forgotten, his promise to bring about his restoration. If the promise was made, it is possible that the power of Themistokles to fulfil it was not equal to his will.

In losing Aristeides, Athens, we may admit, lost a citizen superior to his rival in general morality; but his ostracism is significant chiefly as affirming the adoption of the new policy in opposition to the old conservative or Eupatrid theory that the navy was the seed-bed of novelty and change. That there was a danger in divided or conflicting counsels on such subjects as these, was frankly allowed by Aristeides, when he said that if the Athenians were wise they would throw both Themistokles and himself into the chasm which served as a burying-place for the bodies of criminals (p. 68).

Significance of this event

Three years later the storm of Persian invasion burst with full force on Western Hellas. Aristeides had done nothing to promote those measures which Themistokles regarded as indispensable for the safety of Athens and of Greece; but this was no time for fostering personal animosity, if he had, indeed, ever felt it. We are expressly told by Plutarch (and in this instance we have no reason for discrediting the statement) that the ostracism of Aristeides and other exiles had been revoked on the approach of the Persian army and fleet at the urgent desire of Themistokles himself. Probably Aristeides in his turn was now convinced that the issue of the struggle must be determined at sea at least as much as on land. In the presence of an enemy overwhelming in numbers, it was difficult

Revocation of the sentence, B.C. 480

to bring the men of many independent cities to act together and to strike promptly; and Themistokles was resolved, when the Persian fleet approached the Salaminian waters, that the vacillation of the Greek commanders should be brought to an end.

Meeting of Aristeides and Themistokles at Salamis

His purpose was effectually carried out by means of a message sent by Sikinnos to the Persian leaders; and Themistokles was already aware, probably, that escape without fighting was no longer possible, when he was suddenly summoned from the council to speak with his old opponent, who had just crossed over from Egina. Leaving his colleagues in fierce dissension, he learnt with intense satisfaction from Aristeides that the question of retreat was one which could no longer be discussed. Aristeides knew from his own knowledge that the Greek fleet was surrounded beyond all chance of escape. In few words Themistokles assured him that the movements of the Persian fleet had been caused by the message sent from himself through Sikinnos; but he begged Aristeides to repeat before the council tidings which, coming from him, might be believed by them. Even thus the announcement was all but rejected as false, when a Tenian vessel, deserting from the Persian fleet, established the fact beyond doubt.

Narrative of Herodotos

Such is the story told by Herodotos of the meeting of the two antagonists. The fact may be received without hesitation; but if Plutarch be right, Herodotos is altogether mistaken in representing Aristeides as a man who breaks his banishment and faces the risk involved in violating the sentence passed on him. Herodotos did not know that the decree of banishment had been cancelled at the prayer of Themistokles himself; but there were others, among them the rhetorician Isokrates, who knew nothing of any message sent by Themistokles to the Persian commanders.

The latter had landed a large force on the islet of Psyttaleia, which lies at the eastern end of the narrow strait between the island of Salamis and the opposite coast of Attica. In this narrow strait the battle was to be fought, and the men on

the islet were to be the executioners of such of the defeated Greeks as might venture to land upon it. The fight ended, as with such vast numbers in a confined space it could scarcely fail to end, in inextricable confusion for the Persian host; and in the midst of the frightful turmoil which followed the effort to retreat, Aristeides, landing a large force of heavy armed troops on Psyttaleia, slew every one of the Persians who were upon it. With this terrible massacre the battle, which effectually quelled the courage of Xerxes, came to an end. (B.C. 480.)

Battle of Salamis

In the following year (B.C. 479) Aristeides was among the strategoi or generals, who were to prosecute the war on land. The task was not an easy one. The Persian commander held out proffers which must, he thought, be irresistibly tempting to the Athenians; and the Spartans were besieging the Athenians with entreaties to persist manfully in defence of the common cause. The replies of the Athenians to their enemies and their allies are said to have been suggested by Aristeides. They are full of beauty and spirit, but they are far from being consistent with the history of previous or of subsequent events.

Election of Aristeides as general

In the memorable battle fought near Plataia the Makedonian chief or king plays the part which Aristeides had played before that of Salamis. Going by night to the quarters of the Athenian generals, he tells them that Mardonios had made up his mind to fight on the coming day, but that even if he should fail to attack, it would be their wisdom to remain where they were, as the Persian supplies were all but exhausted. 'If the war end,' he added, 'as ye would have it, remember to deliver me also. I am Alexandros the Makedonian.' Aristeides at least could not have needed this announcement. He must have remembered the man who but a little while ago had appeared in Athens as the envoy of Mardonios and had then urged submission to Xerxes as jealously as he now urged the duty of a persevering resistance.

Conference of the Makedonian chief Alexandros with the Athenian commanders at Plataia, B.C. 479

Learning from Aristeides that the decisive struggle must

be begun in a few hours, the Spartan general Pausanias, we are told, begged Aristeides and his colleagues to change places with him. 'You,' he said, 'have encountered these Persians at Marathon and know their method of fighting. We have had no such experience, for no Spartan has yet been engaged with the Medes.' The story goes on to say that Aristeides eagerly carried out, at the prayer of Pausanias, an arrangement which he had earnestly desired, yet scarcely dared to propose; that Mardonios, becoming aware of the change, likewise altered the disposition of his troops; that, seeing this, Pausanias returned to his former ground, and that, the Persians being brought back to their old position, they were again just as they had been before the conference with Aristeides. In other words, whether the report be true or not, the incident is as superfluous as are others which we have already had to notice (pp. 42, 90, 92, 100, 101).

Alleged changes in the position of the Athenians and Spartans

But the story is a manifest fiction. Spartans had fought with Persians at Thermopylai, at Artemision, and at Salamis, and in each place they had conquered, for, if we follow the traditional narrative, the struggle at Thermopylai was for them a splendid victory. But the picture is also a fiction with a purpose, which the author has done his best to conceal. His wish was to glorify Athens by making Pausanias admit the superiority of the Athenian forces; but if he had said that the Spartans fought on the left wing, the story would have found its way to Sparta, where it would have been received with a storm of indignation. By bringing the Spartans back to their former position before the fight begins, this danger would be avoided. Few Spartans would hear the tale, and as it left untouched the fact for which alone they would care, they would not think it worth while to bestow much thought upon it. The story therefore described the changes as effected during the night, and none but the Athenians would be any the wiser for it.

Manifest untrustworthiness of the tale

In this great battle Aristeides was the worthy leader of

men who succeeded in convincing the Persians that the task of conquering the Western Greeks was hopeless. If he needed or wished for military glory, he had it to the full. From this time onwards his conduct is marked by a wisdom and prudence equal to his high-mindedness. By his advice the Plataians were declared autonomous, or, in other words, were freed from all connexion with the Boiotian Confederacy; and eighty talents were bestowed on them from the spoil to enable them to celebrate fitly the annual commemoration feast, to keep up the tombs, and to build a temple to Athênê. With Themistokles Aristeides acted in perfect harmony. It is not indeed likely that he would be attracted by the plan (which beyond doubt suggested itself to Themistokles) of abandoning the old Athens altogether, and establishing the city at the great harbour of Peiraieus. A measure so revolutionary could scarcely be expected from such a man; but he would be perhaps even more determined than Themistokles himself that Athens should be enabled to maintain her independence effectually, not merely against the attacks of foreign enemies, but against the jealousy of any Greek states.

Military glory and subsequent career of Aristeides

This independence could, under the conditions of ancient life, be secured only by adequate fortifications; and the raising of these works without provoking the interference of Sparta was a difficult and delicate task, with which he knew that Themistokles was pre-eminently qualified to deal. But although the sagacity and subtlety which marked the action of Themistokles would have been looked for in vain from Aristeides, the latter was zealous and earnest in the support of his colleague. Without such support and hearty co-operation, the embassy of Themistokles to Sparta must have failed; and Aristeides deserves all the credit due to the man who saved Athens from such a calamity.

Means for securing the independence of Athens

But the thoroughness with which he had learnt the lessons taught by the events of his political life was shown in the constitutional changes which of his own free will he

came forward to propose towards the end of his career. These events had all tended to give a vast impulse to the growth of democratic feeling. They had brought continually into greater prominence the naval multitude (p. 117), for whom at first he had felt no great liking; and it was impossible to keep the men who had had the chief share in winning the victories which shattered the fleets of Xerxes contented with the measure of prestige secured to them by the Kleisthenean constitution.

Political reforms of Aristeides

By that constitution all Athenian citizens had received the right of voting in the election of magistrates, and their judicial education was insured by the arrangements of the Dikasteria or jury courts, belonging to the Heliaia (p. 66). But the members of the fourth or Thetic class, which comprised the great majority of Athenians, was still ineligible for the archonship. This restriction Aristeides now came forward to remove, B.C. 467; and for doing this he had two reasons. The first was the desire of doing justice to a large body of men who had showed themselves deserving of confidence. The issue of the conflict with Persia had, according to the emphatic assertion of Herodotos, been determined solely by the energy and self-sacrifice of the whole body of Athenians; and the conviction had forced itself on Aristeides that there was no excuse for excluding from the highest offices of the state even the poorest of the citizens who had done their duty bravely and steadily in that supreme struggle. It must, however, be remembered that he was simply abolishing a restriction; and the poor were not often elected merely because they were eligible. His second reason was the discovery that the functions of the archons had been gradually reduced to the level of the capacities of ordinary citizens; and where this was the case, it was quite certain that ordinary citizens would sooner or later be declared capable of discharging them. In truth, we can scarcely doubt that he was prepared for the further change which should determine the election of the archons by lot, though he must at the same time

Reasons for these reforms

have foreseen that this change would inevitably overthrow the predominance of the court of Areiopagos (p. 12).

Ten years before he carried this reform, Aristeides had taken the most prominent part in the formation of the great Delian Confederacy (B.C. 477), which had for its object the extinction of Persian supremacy within the limits of the Continental and Sporadic Hellas (p. 72). This confederacy was rendered possible only by the naval power of Athens; and Aristeides must have been well aware that, if it had rested with himself, that power would never have been developed, and that the result would in all likelihood have been, not the defeat of Xerxes, but his complete success. This consciousness would only make him, now that this naval supremacy was established, the more resolute in doing all that he could to enable Athens and the whole Hellenic world to derive the utmost benefits from it. The conduct of Sparta had been such as to repel, in a special degree, the Asiatic Greeks. Notoriously in the case of Pausanias, and not in this case only, Sparta had shown itself incapable of maintaining its authority over its own servants. It was generally behindhand in giving aid, when aid was most urgently needed; and as a maritime power, Sparta was miserably inefficient. But only a maritime power could deal with the affairs of the Asiatic Greeks, who, almost immediately after the great victories which virtually closed the war with Xerxes, entreated Aristeides to admit them into direct relations with Athens.

Formation of the Delian Confederacy, B.C. 477

It was, in truth, abundantly clear that the Greek world was now divided into two sections, the one gravitating to Sparta as the land power, the other to Athens as having the command of the sea. But Athens could not yet afford to give any wanton offence to Sparta; and therefore we cannot put faith in the story told by Plutarch, that it was by the direct suggestion of Aristeides himself that some Ionian vessels attacked the ships of Pausanias in the harbour of Byzantion, and thus made a reconciliation between Athens and Sparta impossible.

Relative position of Athens and Sparta

But although this tale looks like a fiction, it is undoubtedly true that when a Spartan commission came out to supersede Pausanias, they were met by a determined passive resistance where they had looked for ready submission; and their withdrawal from a field in which they had not the power of inforcing their own decrees, left the confederacy of the Asiatic Greeks with Athens an accomplished fact. They *made*, indeed, a virtue of necessity by affecting satisfaction in the thought that Athens was willing to carry out a task which for themselves had become irksome and costly.

Passive resistance of the Asiatic Greeks to Sparta

The arrangement of the conditions for this new confederacy was a work imposed on Aristeides. The matter needed careful handling. The purpose of the confederacy was not merely self-defence. The Persian power was to be rooted out, at all events from the western half of Lesser Asia, and this task might involve the active warfare of many years. It became necessary, therefore, to fix the amount of contributions in ships, money, and men, to be provided by each member of the confederation in support of the common cause.

Objects of the Delian Confederacy

The sum total of the assessment on the allies, fixed by Aristeides, amounted to 460 talents, but of the items which composed it we know nothing; that it was accepted as just and equitable to all, we may reasonably infer from the fact that the management of the fund was intrusted to officers called Hellenotamiai, or treasurers, elected by the allies generally, who met on terms of perfect equality in the sacred island of Delos.

The assessment of Aristeides

The disputes, jealousies, and changes which subsequently affected this confederation do not belong to the life of Aristeides. It was impossible for him to foresee at starting the part which would be played by some or many of the Asiatic Greeks, or that Athens would be compelled to insist on perseverance in war, when her allies had grown weary of active exertion. For the Athenians, when this change came, there was no alternative.

Subsequent history of the confederation

They were compelled, if they regarded their own safety, to finish the enterprise which they had taken in hand; and as the allies generally could not be trusted for hearty support in this work, it became necessary to transfer the treasury of the confederation from Delos to Athens. Aristeides was, according to one tradition, still living when the transference took place, and pronounced it unjust as well as inexpedient. The statement may be true; but we may be sure that he could not have wished to leave in the hands of unwilling or faithless allies the power of wrecking that maritime empire of Athens, on which the safety and freedom of the whole Greek world depended.

This was, seemingly, the last task in the useful and honourable life of Aristeides. He died, it would seem, about eight or nine years after the establishment of the Delian Confederacy. But beyond this there is little that we can accept without question from the stories related of his last days. Some said that he died at Athens, others that he fell fighting in battle somewhere on the coasts of the Black Sea. There seems to be a general agreement that he died in poverty, and the tale ran that he had not left money enough to pay even for his funeral. Assuredly he had not been so poor always. He could not have been elected archon had he not belonged to the wealthiest class of Athenian citizens. If, as it is said, he was buried at the public expense at Phaleron, the honour was fully deserved; nor can much fault be found with the Athenians if they granted a large sum of money to his son and gave dowries for his daughters.

Death of Aristeides, ? B.C. 468

But although the Athenian Eupatrids dealt gently with his reputation, there were not wanting some who called the incorruptibility even of Aristeides into question; and stories were told that he, too, being unable to pay a heavy fine on a conviction for taking bribes, made his escape to the land where Themistokles afterwards found a shelter, and that there he died. Between such tales and the tradition of his poverty there is a manifest

Allegations of corruption against Aristeides

inconsistency; but these darker shadows thrown across the career even of a man like Aristeides may help us to understand the causes which led to the heavier condemnation meted out to his more successful and perhaps less scrupulous rival Themistokles.

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THEMISTOKLES

THE history of Themistokles is virtually the history not of Athens only but of the Greek world generally throughout the whole period of his career. The constitutional changes effected by Solon and subsequent reformers were manifestly signs of a great quickening in the political aspirations of the people, and pointed to a rapid growth in their powers of thought, which could not fail to show itself in the rising of some one man of commanding intellect and influence.

Significance of the career of Themistokles

Themistokles was a man who would have risen to eminence in any age or country. His resolute enthusiasm combined with a singular coolness in the adaptation of means to ends, and with an intensity of conviction which never left him in any doubt of the course to be pursued, fitted him more especially for dealing with a supreme crisis such as that in which Athens fought not merely her own battle but that of the whole Western world. He had seen from the first what the political growth of the Athenian people must be. He had learnt that Eupatrid ascendency was a thing of the past. He was aware of the changes which were needed to make the force of his countrymen adequate to the tasks which they might have to fulfil. He carried out their changes without flinching, and so when the time came he was ready to face with them the whole power of the Persian despot.

Special qualifications of Themistokles for the work of his life

The birth of Themistokles took place probably about B.C. 514, four years before the expulsion of Hippias from Athens. His father Neokles had, like Miltiades (p. 49),

married a Thrakian woman, or, as some said, Karian; but he could not, like Miltiades, boast of a descent from gods and heroes. There is, however, no sign that Themistokles bestowed any thought on the comparative obscurity of his origin. The most marked characteristics of his boyhood were, we are told, a singular impetuosity and energy, which drew from his teachers the remark that his career was not likely to be insignificant, and that he would be something great, be it good or bad.

Birth and early years of Themistokles

But not much trust can be placed in details which look as if they might have been put together in after years. Instead of joining in the amusements of his companions he may have spent most of his time alone in making speeches to imaginary audiences; and he may, without greatly heeding them, have listened to the warnings of his father, who pointed to some worn-out galleys cast away on the sea-shore as emblems of the fate in store for popular political leaders. Neokles might with equal chance of success have striven to quell his ambition by reminding him, as according to Eastern practice despots are reminded, that the greatest and mightiest must die like other men.

Anecdotes of his boyhood

Whatever may have been the precocity of Themistokles in childhood and youth, he was approaching the time of mature manhood before his genius shone out in its full lustre. He had reached, it would seem, his twenty-fourth year when he fought along with his rival Aristeides in the battle of Marathon, although there is no reason for supposing that he was, like Aristeides, the general of his tribe. That he was deeply impressed by this memorable fight is beyond doubt; that his countrymen generally understood the nature of the impression made on him is by no means so clear.

Themistokles at the battle of Marathon, 490 B.C.

The story is again told that after the battle he withdrew himself from his usual society. It is added that being questioned about it, he replied that the trophy of Miltiades would not let him sleep. It is far more likely that he was occupied with the causes of the struggle than with the results

thus far achieved. Assuredly, he did not envy Miltiades as a general whose exploits on the field could not be surpassed.

His conduct after the battle

He was probably more struck by the raising of the white shield than by any occurrences in the battle itself, or even by its issue. That signal was for him the key to all that had passed since the expulsion of Hippias, or even for some time before it. The general conviction of the Athenians was that the defeat at Marathon was the end of the contest with Persia. Themistokles felt assured that they were utterly mistaken, and that his own work lay in preparing his countrymen and the Greek cities generally for the fiercer struggle which must finally decide the issue.

Seven years later, the ostracism of Aristeides (p. 118) left Themistokles without a rival at Athens. That ostracism was meant, as we have seen, to serve as a protest against the policy which sought to repress the naval developement of the city; and in the carrying out of the counter policy Themistokles displayed a genius which had never been approached by any Greek statesman and which has rarely, if ever, been surpassed by statesmen of any country or age. That throughout the career which began practically with the banishment of his rival he strove to advance the true interests of his country, has never been disputed; but his services to Athens are not impaired, even if it be proved that he was resolved by furthering those interests to secure also his own greatness.

Bearing of the ostracism of Aristeides on the life of Themistokles

He started with a bare competence; he became wealthy, or, as some would have it, amassed even an enormous fortune. We shall see, later on, what may be the value of the stories which have gathered round this tradition. They may be taken as proving that the character of Themistokles was by no means perfect; but the same judgement may be passed on Oliver Cromwell, or Warren Hastings, or Clive; and of these three the last suffered under precisely the same charges which blackened the reputation of Themistokles. The questions which we have to answer turn on the sources whence these charges

Wealth of Themistokles

came, on the designs which they were intended to further, and on the weight to be attached to the minuteness and circumstantiality with which they were urged.

But the verdict even of the most adverse judges on the closing scenes of his life does not affect the picture drawn of him by the historian Thucydides. This picture exhibits him as a man endowed with a wonderful power of discerning the true relations of things and with a seemingly intuitive knowledge of the means by which the worst complications might be unravelled. He went, we are told, straight to his mark, while yet, if he pleased, he could keep that mark hidden from everyone; and so, when Aristeides came to tell him before the battle of Salamis that the Greek fleet was surrounded beyond all possibility of escape, he could answer calmly that the deadlock was one entirely of his own making (p. 120). With the life and the exploits of such a man popular fancy would soon be busy, imputing to him qualities scarcely to be looked for in a human being. The belief grew up that he knew every citizen of Athens by name; and in the time of Aristagoras Herodotos had given their number as 30,000 (p. 87). Thucydides goes on to tell us that by his astonishing apprehension and foresight he was enabled to form the truest judgement of existing things and without toilsome calculation to forecast the future, while yet no man was ever more free from the foolhardy temper which hopes to make up for want of experience and of thought by mere dash and bravery.

Character of Themistokles as drawn by Thucydides

There was, in short, no haphazard valour in Themistokles, whose character we should utterly misconceive if we attributed to him the confidence of an untrained and impetuous mind. No man, we are assured, ever had a more clearly defined policy, and no man could inforce his policy with more luminous persuasiveness. But Themistokles did not choose always so to inforce it; and therefore at a time when it was impossible to weld into one compact body an army made up of men almost fatally deficient in powers of combination and cohesion, he was

Political genius of Themistokles

compelled to take many a step which to those who served under him might seem to have little or no justification in law. If he knew what was good or hurtful for them better than they knew themselves, he would not allow technical or legal scruples to withhold him from measures which must be carried out at once and decisively or not at all.

The victory at Marathon had been preceded by a tedious and uninteresting contest with the Eginetans. The result for Athens was as unsatisfactory and humiliating as that of the struggle with Megara for the possession of Salamis in the days of Solon (p. 5). For Themistokles it must have been especially exasperating to see that Athens could not hold her own against the inhabitants of a petty island close to their own great harbour with any fleet of her own raising, and that she must be the suitor of a Dorian city before she could confront them with an adequate force (p. 118). Even thus the Athenians were defeated, losing four ships with their crews.

War between Athens and Egina, 491 B.C.

These failures and rebuffs removed all hesitation from the mind of Themistokles. The battle of Marathon had shown him how much the army of a single Hellenic city (for Athens had here been aided only by the one thousand allies from Plataia) could do against the loose discipline and weaker zeal of barbarian troops. The lack of success in the war with the Eginetans convinced him that the most urgent need for Athens was the development of her maritime power. Henceforth the naval greatness of Athens became the one end on which all his efforts were concentrated. This determination widened, no doubt, the gulf which at this time separated him from Aristeides, and may have contributed to bring about the banishment of the latter. However this may have been, the event was one on which Themistokles was not likely to waste any vain regrets.

Resolution of Themistokles to develope the maritime power of Athens

His business was to prepare for the storm which he knew was coming. It was to the last degree unlikely that the young Persian king Xerxes should abandon the design on

which his father Dareios had set his heart; and the failure of the Athenians in the contest with the Eginetans would furnish him with an irresistible argument for preparing to encounter the immeasurably more formidable power of the Persian despot. He could assure them that this mighty power would be directed especially against themselves.

Anticipations of a second Persian war

The impulse given to Persian conquest in Europe, if we put aside the strange tale of the Scythian expedition of Dareios (p. 94), had come from their own expelled tyrant. Under his advice the misty projects of the Persian king had taken shape as a definite and coherent scheme. From Hippias his satraps had learnt that the only opposition really to be feared must come from Athens, that the Athenians alone were beginning to feel that they were in duty bound to guard not their own interests only but those of the whole Hellenic race, and that if their existence could be overcome, the Dorian states could be dealt with as isolated units which would never combine persistently to arrest the progress of the Persian arms. Of these facts the results of two embassies sent from Athens to Artaphernes (pp. 52, 55) furnished ample evidence; and their refusal to receive Hippias as a tributary of the Persian king had, indeed, been already treated as a virtual declaration of war.

Intrigues of Hippias, and their results

Happily for Athens, the ostracism of Aristeides left to Themistokles an influence practically unopposed; and he used the short interval which yet remained before the second Persian invasion to supply the deficiencies which still threatened disaster, if not utter ruin. It is said that during the year which preceded the supreme struggle Themistokles was Archon Eponymos (p. 24); but although his exertions would be redoubled with the additional power thus gained, it is not likely that he now for the first time urged the adoption of the great measures which the crisis rendered necessary. If Athens was really to be paramount at sea, the foundations of her supremacy must

Extent of the influence of Themistokles

be laid not on the shores of the open bay of Phalêron, to the east of the promontory of Mounychia, but in the fortification of the three natural harbours included in the great haven of Peiraieus.

That time was given even for such preparations as were actually made was the result only of accident. The indignation of Dareios at the defeat of his hosts on the field of Marathon had awakened in him a burning desire for vengeance: but his order for an expedition on a vastly larger scale was suspended first by the revolt of Egypt, then by his own death, and lastly by the delays caused by Xerxes, who held that success must depend on the mere multiplication of numbers.

Accidental postponement of the fierce struggle with Persia

Meanwhile Athens was growing, almost daily, richer and stronger. The proceeds of the silver mines of Laureion, the southernmost district of Attica, were adding largely to her internal resources; and the method in which this revenue was applied seemed in the eyes of Themistokles to imply a narrowness of vision bordering on blindness. Before the days of Solon feuds and factions had been too busy to leave time for working this source of wealth; nor is there evidence that any use was made of it during the tyranny of the Peisistratidai. But a new impulse had been given to enterprise by the reforms of Kleisthenes, and the mines had been made to yield a sum which furnished yearly ten drachmas to every Athenian citizen.

Proceeds of the silver mines of Laureion

This petty profit Themistokles induced the Athenians to forego; and if we take the number of the citizens as not greater than that which it had been in the days of Aristagoras (p. 87), three hundred thousand drachmas were added to the funds available for strengthening the city both by land and sea. By the advice of Themistokles this money was devoted to the building of two hundred ships to be employed against the Eginetans. Such was the nominal plea put forward for a measure which was to have consequences reaching immeasurably further; and Herodotos might, therefore, well say that

Employment of this revenue by Themistokles

this war with a small neighbouring island was nothing less than the salvation of Greece.

But the influence of Themistokles was no longer confined to Athens only. In other Greek cities also men's eyes were being opened to the folly and mischief of inter-political jealousies and isolation. A council was gathered at the isthmus of Corinth, which may be regarded as in some degree a Pan-Hellenic congress; and here the need of making up existing quarrels in the face of a terrible danger threatening all alike was freely and fully acknowledged. In the presence of this peril the Eginetans laid aside for the present their feud with Athens; but all that was done towards conciliation and common action served only to show how much was left undone. The summons sent for help to Greek cities scattered throughout Sporadic Hellas (p. 72) was wholly disregarded by some, and of all the cities taken together the majority were Medising, or in other words were disposed to cast in their lot with the subjects and tributaries of the Persian king. The memory of the Ionic revolt and its disastrous issue (p. 88) greatly depressed even those of the Greeks who were resolved not to submit to Xerxes; and they were still more cast down at the thought of the utter inadequacy of the Greek fleets to cope with the Phenician navy of the Persian king.

Congress of allies at the Corinthian isthmus

In this season of supreme discouragement the great impulse to hope and action came, as Herodotos assures us, from Athens, or we may say rather from Themistokles personally. The historian, declaring emphatically that his words are forced from him by strong conviction of their truth, tells us that if the Athenians had abandoned their country or yielded themselves to Xerxes, none else would have made any attempt to resist by sea, while on land, in spite of all fortifications on the Corinthian isthmus, the Spartans would have been forsaken by their allies and must in the end either have died fighting or have succumbed. Thus, he sums up, the Athenians, next after the gods, drove away the king, because they feared not the oracles of Delphoi

Energy and devotion of the Athenian people

neither were they scared by the great perils which were coming on their country.

That Themistokles made use of these oracles to further his own plans, nay, that he had much to do even with the form in which they were set forth, it is scarcely possible to doubt. His own mind was unalterably made up. He was well aware of the influences under which the Pythian priestess was in the habit of speaking (p. 50): and he was the last man to hesitate in employing such influences in a crisis like the present. The general situation was, of course, as well known at Delphoi as elsewhere, and the same precautions would be taken now as at other times to guard the credit of the Delphian god, whatever might be the issue. Nor would Themistokles have any objection to harsh and discouraging answers, so long as a single ray of light pointed in the direction in which he wished to guide his countrymen.

Themistokles and the Delphian oracle

Accordingly, of the two responses given to the Athenian messengers the first was black and pitiless enough. The counsel of the god was that they should leave their homes and flee away. Fire and war, hastening thither in a Syrian chariot, would soon lay their city low, and wrap its temples in flames. Down the walls of their shrines the big drops were even now streaming, as they trembled for fear, and the black blood was pouring from their roofs for the sorrow that was coming. The answer wound up with the charge, 'Go ye from my holy place and brace up your hearts for the evil.' This last phrase was ambiguous, and designedly so; but it was probably meant to be understood in the sense which the words seem most naturally to bear.

The first Delphian response

The messengers were dismayed; but they were not to be allowed to leave Delphoi without something more than words of such terrific import. A Delphian named Timon advised them to take olive branches and try the oracle once more; and for this encouragement Timon had in all likelihood already received his recompense from

The second response

Themistokles. The second answer was couched in the following form:

Pallas cannot prevail with Zeus, who lives on Olympos, though she has besought him with many prayers.

And his word which I now tell you is firmly fixed as a rock.

For thus saith Zeus, that, when all else within the land of Kekrops (Cecrops) is wasted, the wooden wall alone shall not be taken; and this shall help you and your children.

But wait not until the horsemen come and the footmen; turn your backs upon them now, and one day you shall meet them.

And thou, divine Salamis, shalt destroy those that are born of women, when the seed time comes, or the harvest.

This response, as being more hopeful, the messengers, it is said, wrote down; and if we take this statement strictly, it would imply that the previous answer was not written down, and therefore probably that it was of later fabrication. However this may be, we are assured that the second answer was read unchanged in the ears of the Athenian people. It was just what Themistokles wanted. It might be possible to put on it an interpretation different to his own: but that interpretation would find favour only with a minority of the most timorous and feeble-minded. The very ease with which the words might be made to coincide with his own policy seems to leave little doubt or none as to the influence which produced it. We have then no reason whatever for questioning the narrative which tells us that when the answer was read to the Athenians Themistokles at once came forward.

Reading of this response to the Athenians

'Athenians,' he said, 'the soothsayers, who bid you leave your country and to seek another elsewhere, are wrong; and so are the old men who tell you to stay at home and guard the Akropolis, as though the god pointed to it when he speaks of the wooden wall, because long ago there was a thorn hedge around it. This will not help you; and they are all leading you astray when they say that you must be beaten in a sea-fight at Salamis, and that this is the meaning of the words which speak of Salamis as

Interposition of Themistokles

destroying the children of women. The words do not mean this. If they had been spoken of us, the priestess would certainly have said "Salamis the wretched," not "Salamis the divine," if the people of the land were doomed to die there. They are spoken not of us but of our enemies. Arm then for the fight at sea, for the fleet is your wooden wall.'

With these words he gained his point; and he gained it by the same means which enabled Kleisthenes to bring about the expulsion of the Peisistratidai (p. 50). Themistokles would be no more troubled by scruples than Kleisthenes, and would therefore be at least as ready to avail himself of so convenient an instrument. Whether oracles, portents, and prodigies had any real power over his commanding mind, we have no means of determining: but of such power there is little sign or none. His career as related by Herodotos is in the closest agreement with the judgement passed on him by Thucydides; and as described even by the earlier historian, every feature in his character points to the mental condition of a much later and less credulous age. The answers from Delphoi serve in his case only to illustrate the mode in which he guided the religious prejudices or convictions of his countrymen. He will not allow them to swerve from the path in which alone he sees hope and safety; but he is compelled to obtain a sanction from the ambiguous phraseology of a Delphian priestess prompted, it would seem, by himself. The results which he achieved are sufficient proof that, apart from such encouragements, he employed arguments more akin to those of Perikles forty or fifty years later, and that he must have impressed on his countrymen the abiding vitality of Athens so long as she continued in her own proper path. The mental and religious condition of his time threw these arguments into the background; but beyond doubt he realised the future success of Athens against Persia as clearly as Perikles saw that Athens must come out triumphant in the struggle with Sparta and the Dorian Greeks, if only she would follow his counsels.

Means employed by Themistokles for obtaining this answer

A story is told that it was for a time doubtful whether the Athenians would take as their chief leader Themistokles or an obscure competitor, whom Themistokles bribed to withdraw his claim. We cannot easily bring ourselves to believe that the Athenians would thus imperil the safety of their city and of all Hellas by intrusting the supreme command to a man of whom we have heard nothing before and never hear anything again: and we shall see in the case of Themistokles himself how little trust is sometimes to be placed in these stories of bribery and corruption. The Athenians could scarcely be blind to the folly or rather the madness of making a wrong choice in such a crisis. The black cloud of invasion was drawing nearer and nearer, and the dangers nearer home were becoming more and more threatening. By placing themselves under the guidance of Themistokles the Athenians insured their own supremacy in Hellas; but for the present their title was not only not recognised in many quarters, it was openly repudiated.

Election of Themistokles as general

The city, which was ready to furnish a fleet of two hundred ships or more, might fairly look to exercise command at sea; but in the congress at the Corinthian isthmus the allies declared bluntly that if they could not be under Spartan rule, they would dissolve the confederacy, and the threat implied in this declaration could not fail to be understood by all who heard it. With genuine patriotism the Athenians withdrew a claim on which they might with good reason have insisted. They were ready to see their city burnt, their lands ravaged, and to be themselves driven with their families into exile rather than suffer the ill-cemented fabric of Hellenic society to fall utterly to pieces. In other quarters they had but little to hope for and very much to fear. Even in Sparta they could look for no enthusiasm; and from the cities to the north of Attica they had the gravest cause for apprehension. It was but too likely that here the invaders would meet with little resistance or none, even if they were not welcomed with open arms.

Critical position of the Athenians

From days now ancient, Phenician influence had made itself felt in the Boiotian land, and we are perhaps unable to determine how largely a Phenician element may have affected the blood of the population. The extraction of history from mythical traditions is generally a dangerous process; but tales which speak of the importation of Phenician letters and writing by Kadmos, the founder of Thebes, cannot be misunderstood. The very name of this city carries us away to the Eastern world. The legends of Dionysos and of Pentheus point to a fierce struggle between the old religion and the orgiastic rites of Syrian worship; and Phenician names in Boiotian mythology, which have assumed a wonderfully Hellenic look, have undergone in reality but a slight disguise. Kadmos is no more than the Semitic Kedem, (the East), carried to Erev, Eurôpê, (the West). Their son is Melikertes, the Phenician Melkarth, who is known also as Palaimon, a name which again is as nearly as possible a translation of Baal Hamon. It is clear therefore that the waves of Phenician enterprise broke mainly on the Boiotian coast; and it was in the Boiotian land that Xerxes was received not merely with indifference but with a vehement enthusiasm.

Condition of Boiotia

The Argives of the Peloponnesos declared their intention of remaining neutral, because, as descended from Perseus the father of Perses, the progenitor of the Persians, they did not care to interfere in a strife in which their kinsmen on either side were antagonists. But in Thebes and elsewhere Medism, as it was called (p. 136), assumed another and more virulent form; and this vehement desire for Persian rule marked for the most part the noble families in whose hands the main body of the people became merely passive instruments. The very depth of the anti-Hellenic feeling manifested by these Eupatrid chiefs may probably be taken as evidence that they were not altogether Hellenic in blood themselves.

Medism of the Thebans and Argives

The chief danger therefore was that Persian invasion might thrust itself in like a wedge between the lands to the

south and the north of the Boiotian border, and so cripple and paralyse them both. The Aleuad chiefs of Thessaly were, like the Theban nobles, vehement partisans of Xerxes; but that their treason found no favour in the eyes of the Thessalians generally is proved by the earnest intreaties addressed by the latter to the Athenians that a vigorous stand should be made against the barbarian in the dangerous defiles through which the Peneios works its way into the sea.

The Aleuad chiefs of Thessaly

Such an effort they would support with their utmost strength; but they confessed plainly that their geographical position rendered it impossible for them to hold their ground without large help from their Hellenic kinsfolk. Such aid failing them, they must secure their safety by making a covenant with the Persian king, and this covenant would in all likelihood compel them to take an active part against those whom they would infinitely prefer to help.

The Thessalian people

The Thessalian pass of Tempe, along which a road stretches to the extent of five miles, is nowhere more than twenty and in some parts not more than thirteen feet in width. No post therefore, it might well have been thought, could be more easily maintained. A Spartan and Athenian force of ten thousand Hoplites, or heavily-armed soldiers, was dispatched at once to occupy the defile, the Athenian troops being commanded by Themistokles. But Themistokles with his Spartan colleague held it for only a few days; and in the popular traditions many causes were assigned for its abandonment.

Themistokles at the pass of Tempe, B.C. 480

The more simple tale, framed in sheer terror of Persian power, ascribed it to a warning of the Makedonian chief Alexandros, who assured them that, if they remained where they were, they would be trampled under the feet of the invading hosts. The other version traced it to the more reasonable fear that the barbarians, instead of undertaking the impossible task of forcing their way through a defile which a handful of men could hold against myriads, would take, as in fact they did take, the western

Reasons for the abandonment of the pass

road through the Perrhaibian territory to the city of Gomnos. If this be so, the Athenians and Spartans feared, not that they might be trodden down by advancing hordes in Tempe, but that they might be taken in the rear when the army of Xerxes had worked its way to the south over the more westerly slopes of Olympos.

Involuntary Medism of the Thessalians

The Thessalians, thus deserted, passed absolutely under the power of the Aleuad chieftains, and, irritated probably at the treatment which they had received, threw themselves heartily into the Persian cause. Thus before Xerxes had begun his westward march from Thermai, his messengers returned with the tidings that he was already virtual lord of all the Greek cities to the north of the borders of Attica.

Un-shaken purposes of Themistokles

The whole of Thessaly was lost by the abandonment of Tempe and the failure to guard the Perrhaibian road to Gomnos; but although Themistokles was not likely to underrate the extent of this loss, he was probably not greatly discouraged by it. He felt that the Phenician fleet was the backbone of the Persian power, and that nothing but a decisive encounter at sea could possibly break it. If their navy could be shattered or destroyed, the land forces would be left comparatively helpless. Still the invader must be resisted both by land and by sea; and the Medizing Greeks must be warned of the risks which they were running by joining the enemies of their country.

Threats of punishment held out to the Medizing Greeks

We are told, therefore, that at the congress now gathered at the Isthmus the representatives of the allies, acting by the advice of Themistokles, pledged themselves, in the event of their success in the war, to tithe to the Delphian god the property or even the persons of those who joined the Medes. But we have to remember that the confederates, either now or later on, are said to have sworn that they would leave in ruins, as a memorial for all coming ages, the temples profaned and destroyed by the Persians; and as the genuineness

of this oath was in later times called into question, the story of the threatened tithing may be also not beyond suspicion.

Occupation of Thermopylai and Artemision

But it is certain that after the abandonment of Tempe the confederates resolved that a stand should be made in the defile of Thermopylai, while their fleet should take up its position on the northernmost Euboian coast, which from a temple of Artemis built on it was known as the Artemision.

The supreme command of the naval force thus assembled was intrusted to the Spartan Eurybiades. The allies now, as

Progress of the Persian fleet and army

before, made this an indispensable condition, which the Athenians, to their lasting credit, cheerfully accepted. The fleet reached Artemision with crews fully prepared for fighting, though perhaps not keenly eager for the conflict. Two days later the Persian ships hove into sight; but according to the old tale the divine jealousy had already been at work to render the conditions of the struggle somewhat more equal. A fearful storm, stirred up by the god Boreas, who had married the daughter of the Athenian dragon-king Erechtheus, had dashed four hundred of their vessels on the iron-bound coast of Magnesia, and strewed the shore with rich spoils of gold and silver and the costliest treasures of eastern art and luxury. On land the Persian king had been victorious at Thermopylai over Leonidas and his Spartans; but the terrible cost of success wakened in him, it is said, grave misgivings of the final issue.

The hopes of his admirals were higher than his own. These, we are told, were resolved that not a single Greek

Attempt to take the Greek fleet in the rear

vessel should escape: and so while the main body of their fleet remained facing the Greek ships off Artemision, a detachment of 200 Persian vessels was sent round the eastern coast of Euboia to double the southern promontory of Geraistos and to take the Greek fleet in the rear at Euripos.

We have now to deal with a difficult and suspicious narrative, which it would not be necessary to examine, had

it not a direct bearing on the conduct of Themistokles. That he was carrying out his plans to the best of his power, we may be sure: but it is not less certain that he was hampered and thwarted at almost every step. The Persian squadron was sent round Geraistos on the very day on which the Persians first came in sight of the Greek fleet, and the latter, we are assured, had taken up their position at Artemision with the full intention of fighting. On this same day the diver Skyllias of Skiônê, deserting from the Persians, brought them tidings of the dispatch of the squadron to intercept them. Thus within a few hours after the time when they first saw the enemy's ships the Greek commanders learnt that the attempt to avoid a battle by retreating would be useless; and until they saw the Persian ships, it is distinctly implied that they had no intention of retreating. But along with these positive statements we have a further circumstantial narrative which states that the Greeks on seeing the Persian ships resolved to retreat as they had come, and to this retreat Themistokles would be a consenting party.

Tidings of this attempt brought to the Greek fleet at Artemision

Terrified at this impending desertion, which would match the abandonment of the Thessalians at Tempe, the Euboians besought Eurybiades to tarry but a single day during which they might remove their families from the island; and failing in this they resolved to try a more potent argument than mere entreaty with the Athenian commander. Themistokles, it is said, received from them the sum of thirty talents on condition of his preventing this cowardly flight. Of this sum, the narrator goes on to tell us, he bestowed, as from himself, five talents on Eurybiades, and three on the Corinthian Adeiman tos. The remaining twenty-two, we have especially to note, he kept for himself, while he left the Spartan and Corinthian leaders under the impression that they had been bribed with Athenian money. In short, of the transaction between himself and the Euboians he dropped not the faintest hint; and on their part the Euboian bribers, it must be admitted, kept

Alleged bribing of Themistokles by the Euboians

their own counsel with astonishing secrecy, and repressed by an equally wonderful silence the regret which they must have felt on learning a few hours later that their bribe had been a superfluous and useless waste of money.

Suspicious aspects of the story

The story of this bribe must, in fact, be taken along with that of the exactions of Themistokles in the Egean islands after the victory at Salamis. In both cases we have, wonderful to relate, only the accusation without the faintest effort to obtain redress. It cannot be for a moment supposed that the Athenians would have refused to listen to the Euboians, had they demanded an account of the way in which their money had been spent. According to the story Themistokles remained the possessor of the enormous sum of twenty-two talents; and this sum he would have been compelled to yield up, even if the bribes to Eurybiades and Adeimantos had been held to account for the remaining eight. The fact that no such demand for inquiry or for restoration was made either now or by the Egean islanders after the battle of Salamis seems of itself to be proof conclusive that these huge sums were never given or exacted.

Indecisive battle at Artemision

The tidings of the diver Skyllias caused a change in the counsels of the Greek leaders at Artemision. They resolved now to stay where they were until nightfall, and then under cover of darkness to move down the strait towards Euripos and meet the Persian squadron sent round the island to cut them off. But some hours yet remained of daylight, and as the Persian fleet made no movement, the Greeks resolved to attack them and to gain some experience as to their mode of fighting. To the Persians here, as at Marathon, the Greeks as they advanced seemed mad; and as the overwhelming multitude of Persian vessels closed round them, the Ionians in the service of Xerxes are said to have pitied their western kinsfolk as victims ready prepared for the slaughter. But on a given signal the confederate Greeks drew their ships into a circle with their prows facing outwards, and on a second

signal they charged the enemy with their full force. Thirty Persian ships were captured, and during the fight a Lemnian vessel deserted to the Greeks, thus warning Xerxes of the slender trust to be placed in the most efficient of his seamen.

The action was in no way decisive; but the powers of heaven were again to fight on behalf of the Athenians and their allies. The storm which had shattered so many Persian ships on the Magnesian coast was renewed with tremendous violence. It compelled the Greeks to remain where they were; but it wrought wild havoc on the Persian vessels, which were working their way along the eastern coast of Euboia. The squadron was virtually destroyed, and thus, we are told, the Divine Nemesis so far reduced the number of the Persian fleet as to give the Greeks some chance of final victory.

Disastrous effects of storms on the Persian fleet

In spite of this disaster the Persian commanders seem to have been by no means dismayed: and when they found that the Athenian fleet had been strengthened by a reinforcement of fifty ships which had captured a few Karian vessels, they were only the more determined to punish their presumption, and to bring on the decisive battle which should show whether the Greeks or the Persians were to be masters of the Euripos. By adopting the order of a crescent, they thought that their own superiority of numbers would enable them easily to surround and overwhelm the confederate fleet; but the very multitude of their ships is said to have been fatal to success, although their crews did their best to achieve it.

Second battle of Artemision

The struggle was, in truth, a fierce one. The loss of the Persians was necessarily greater numerically; but the Greeks had been very severely handled, and their strength seriously impaired. The Spartans were once more discouraged and depressed; and their leaders resolved on immediate retreat. Themistokles strove in vain to shake their determination; but nothing is said of any persuasion beyond that of words.

Renewed determination of the allies to retreat

The twenty-two talents, remaining after the bribes administered to Eurybiades and Adeimantos (p. 145), were, for all that we know to the contrary, still in his possession. Why did he not make use of them? and why should the argument of gold be less potent now than it had been only a few days before? Each step taken in retreat imperilled more and more the final success of his plans; but in spite of this we hear not a word about the resources thus mysteriously left out of sight.

Position of Themistokles

Nay, the Euboians themselves, although they were now under the necessity of leaving their island, make no reference to the mighty sum of money which they had spent in vain. The request which they now made to Themistokles was that he would see them taken safely across the strait; but while he assured them that they might rely on his doing this, he also told them that it was better that they should eat their own cattle than that they should leave them to be eaten by their enemies. The Euboians had failed, it seems, to remove their herds, although an old prophecy, bearing the name of Bakis, had warned them to do so when the barbarian placed a yoke upon the sea, and they now found themselves driven to involuntary feasting, in order that they might not leave materials for heavy banquets for the Persian invaders whenever they might land.

Later requests of the Euboians

But if any feeling of hesitation had lingered in the minds of the Greek commanders, it was finally extinguished, when the tidings came that, while they themselves had been fighting at Artemision, a still harder conflict had been going on in Thermopylai; that this conflict had ended in the death of Leonidas and his Spartan force; and that Xerxes was master of the pass which formed the gate of Southern Hellas, just as the defile of Tempê commanded the great Thessalian plain. That the Persian king had achieved an all but decisive success, is abundantly proved by the subsequent conduct of the confederated Greeks.

Tidings from Thermopylai

The sequel of the narrative shows that the earlier portions

have been moulded to suit the ethical and poetical feeling of the time. Each city or state has some particular conflict or battle in which it acquires a special preeminence. The Athenians had all the glory of Marathon: the Spartans must have all the glory of Thermopylai.

Distribution of merit among the allied cities

Hence in the struggle which goes on in that celebrated defile the Athenians take no part, although the maintenance of the pass was not only indispensable to their safety but required by the policy for which they had all along pleaded most eagerly. The barbarian must not be suffered to ravage the lands of Greek cities, if it should be possible to prevent it. Yet here it would seem that they could not spare the smallest force for the defence of a post which ten men might hold against a thousand, although they had been able to send a considerable army under Themistokles to guard the pass of Tempe. But popular traditions, even when they are most distorted, generally leave some tokens which point to the real course of events; and one such sign we have in the statement that the Athenians still felt so far the importance of the stand made at Thermopylai that they sent one of their citizens with charge to keep them informed at Artemision of any events with which it might be necessary to make them acquainted.

Alleged absence of the Athenians from Thermopylai

The grounds, therefore, are strong for thinking that the forces employed at Thermopylai were larger and that the defeat was more serious than the traditional narratives would lead us to suppose. The loss of three hundred Spartans with their attendants would scarcely account for such extreme discouragement as that which is now betrayed by the confederate Greeks at Artemision. From this point the entreaties and arguments of Themistokles fall on ears obstinately deaf. Two passes had already been abandoned, and the next step would be to fall back upon and to defend the coast of Attica; and on this duty the Athenians insisted very strongly, but in vain.

Probable results of the fighting in Thermopylai

The Greek fleet forthwith began its retreat, the Corinthians leading the way; and all that Themistokles, following with the Athenians in the rear, could do was to carve inscriptions which might do some mischief to the enemy. These inscriptions, cut on the rocks wherever streams of water fit for drinking found their way to the sea, besought the Ionians in the service of Xerxes either to desert in a body or to remain neutral, and to persuade the Karians to do the same, or, if this should be impracticable, to take the least possible share in any conflict.

Retreat of the allied fleet

Such addresses as these, if they came to the knowledge of Xerxes, must make him regard the Ionians and Karians, that is his best seamen, with the greatest suspicion, even if they failed to bring about the systematic desertion which they professed to ask for; but it is hard indeed to understand how he could at any time regard them with any other feelings. His whole policy towards such subjects as the Asiatic Greeks is singularly puzzling. When in his expedition to Egypt Cambyses wished to employ his Phenician mariners for the destruction of Carthage, he was met by a flat refusal. It is strange, therefore, that Xerxes could think it worth while to carry with him in his fleet or as land troops men who never could be expected to do much in such an enterprise and against whose probable treachery he must maintain a troublesome and costly watch.

Xerxes and the Asiatic Greeks

The one thought of Eurybiades and Adeimantos now was to confine themselves to the defence of the Peloponnesos only. With a marvellous infatuation they had convinced themselves that no Persian fleet would visit the shores of Argolis and Lakonia, and therefore that by land they would be safe if they adequately fortified the Corinthian isthmus, without making any use of their navy. Against this suicidal policy Themistokles resolved to make a last desperate stand. It was just possible that they might be induced to arrest their retreat at Salamis, if it were only to give the Athenians sufficient time to remove their households from Attica and otherwise to complete their plans.

Plans of the Spartan and Corinthian leaders

Thus far the intreaties of Themistokles prevailed, but no further; and here we have again to mark that no use whatever is made of that mysterious hoard of two and twenty talents in an emergency which made a judicious employment of money imperiously necessary. No hint is given that any bribes were offered, although their acceptance in one instance (p. 145) was a sufficient warrant for the belief that they would not be refused in another.

Strenuous opposition of Themistokles

At Salamis therefore the fleet remained, while the Spartans with the whole available force of all their allies worked by night and by day, breaking up the Skironid road and building a wall from sea to sea across the Corinthian isthmus. Materials of all sorts, stones bricks, timber, and mats full of sand, were employed to raise this huge bulwark, which, when finished, imparted little confidence to those who had built it and who were to defend it, and still less to the men serving on board the fleet at Salamis.

Building of the Isthmian wall

Depression, in fact, had passed with all into a feeling of dismay, which it is impossible to explain fully except on the supposition that the traditional narratives are not entirely trustworthy as records of facts. Even according to these narratives the enterprise of Xerxes had thus far been steadily successful. Storms had dashed many of his ships upon iron-bound coasts; and in actual battles his losses had exceeded numerically those of the Greeks. But they were not greater, perhaps not nearly so great, in proportion to the mighty armaments at his disposal. Nor was the quality of his forces such as to justify their enemies in regarding them with contempt. The story of Thermopylai would by itself lead us to suspect that the army of Xerxes employed in that pass was not so large or the force opposed to them so small as is commonly represented; and it is more than possible that the inaction ascribed repeatedly to the recurrence of religious festivals was virtually a plea put forth to cover the failure of serious efforts made to resist the enemy.

Depression and discouragement of the allies

The time of the greatest depression on the part of the Greeks is manifestly that at which the enterprise of Xerxes was brought most nearly to a successful issue. The former were all but overcome; and it was natural that the popular tradition of the time should represent them as overcome not by thousands but by myriads, while the ultimate failure of Xerxes was represented not less naturally as a defeat of millions by thousands.

Character of the tradition

To us, on the other hand, it is clear that the glory of the Greeks is enormously enhanced if the power of Xerxes lay not so much in the numbers of his army generally as in the strength and spirit of his Persian soldiers, whose fathers had been led by Cyrus to victory after victory. The same combination of energy with bravery is displayed by their descendants still after the lapse of five and twenty centuries; and our appreciation of the nature and issue of the struggle must be both more sound and more just, when we see that Themistokles had to paralyse the resistance of men little, if at all, inferior to Athenians or Spartans, except in the one point that the Eastern Aryan fought to establish the rule of one despotic will while his western brother strove to set up and maintain the dominion of an equal and self-imposed law.

The Persian soldiers in the army of Xerxes

From this it would follow that the long and tedious stories which describe the progress of Xerxes as that of a rolling snowball spring from the vulgar exaggerations of Eastern nations, and have been handed down to us by Greek historians who adopted these exaggerations as heightening the lustre of their exploits. Immeasurably inferior to many of his own generals in all the qualities which form a great leader, Xerxes may have felt a stupid pride in dragging after himself a useless rabble of faint-hearted and ill-disposed subjects; but all these, in whatever countries they may have been gathered, added nothing to his chances of success or to the dangers feared by his enemies. The numbers of this rabble are, as all admit, largely exaggerated; and we may fairly put them on one side in tracing

Numbers of the army of Xerxes

the course of an enterprise which all but succeeded in riveting the chains of Asiatic despotism upon Europe.

The real peril to western freedom lay in the genuine Persian element in the invading host; and it was fully appreciated by Themistokles, if not by his countrymen generally. He saw, in fact, that no effectual resistance could for the present be offered by land. Athens must be abandoned to the will of the enemy; nor were there wanting portents and prodigies which gave weight to the lesson which he wished to inforce. The priestess of Athênê announced that the sacred serpent of the Akropolis, which represented to them the line of their dragon-kings, had refused to take its food; and Themistokles readily accepted the sign as a plain sanction of his own measures.

Resolution of Themistokles to abandon Athens

Hence immediately on the arrival of the fleet from Artemision he issued a proclamation announcing that the city and the rock which rose above it must be left to the protecting care of the virgin goddess, and warning all Athenians to remove their families from their country with all possible speed. The work of removal, in whatever measure it may have been carried out, was accomplished in less than six days, for within that time after the departure of the Greek fleet from Artemision Xerxes was master of Athens. That city was beyond doubt left desolate, and its inhabitants as well as those of other places which lay in the immediate track of the invader fled, some to Troizen, where they were welcomed with a marvellous hospitality, and others to Salamis and Egina. But that Attica, as a whole, was carefully searched by the Persians, we can scarcely infer even from the fact that after the flight of Xerxes the Samians are said to have sent back five hundred Athenians who had been carried away as prisoners.

Abandonment of Athens

On the other side we have to set the perplexing fact that, having gained possession of Athens, the Persians made no attempt to advance beyond it even as far as Eleusis, and that the Persian cavalry never went beyond the Thriasian or Rharian plain. If the report of these facts

The Persians at Athen

may be trusted, there is no reason for supposing that the inhabitants of the more remote districts of Attica abandoned their homes and their property.

Thus far Xerxes was fairly justified in the hope that he might establish his sway in the land through which he had advanced victoriously. To the north of the borders of Attica his authority was acknowledged by all the Boiotian towns except Thespiai and Plataia. The Boiotian nobles were his vehement partisans, and the Aleuad chiefs of Thessaly had welcomed him with enthusiasm. But the character of the momentous drama was to be now changed, and according to the ethical conception of the age the turning point was reached when at the Boiotian town of Panopeai the army of Xerxes was divided into two portions, one of which pursued its course southwards, while the other marched to Delphoi to plunder the temple of its wealth and especially to bring away the offerings dedicated there by the Lydian king Kroisos (Crœsus).

Prospects of Xerxes

The story of the vengeance taken by the Delphian god, of the appearance of the local heroes of the land, and of the fall of the rocks which crushed multitudes of the invaders, is singularly striking: but how far the picture has been embellished by the imagination of a later age, it is impossible to say. If we are to believe the words put into the mouth of Mardonios just before the battle of Plataia, the expedition to Delphoi never took place at all. On this point Mardonios is made to express himself with absolute assurance; but the statement comes to us only in a speech, and this speech is manifestly framed in accordance with the ethical sentiment that the gods had made the prime mover of the evil believe a lie and reach the utmost height of pride in the hour of his doom. It was not the first time that the majesty of the gods had come between the spoiler and his prey. The army of Cambyses had been overwhelmed in the desert, when it was marching to seek the shrine of the Egyptian Ammon; and down almost to its minutest features we have the story of this Delphian expedition repeated in the tradi-

Persian expedition to Delphoi

tions of the Gaulish attack on the same sanctuary just two centuries later. Here again we have the terror of the Delphians, the assurance of the god that he is able to guard his own, the quaking of the earth, the rending of the crags from the heights of Parnassos, the thunder and lightning, and the reappearance of the heroes, only that these are four instead of two in number.

Character of the story

The identity of these stories seems to inforce the conclusion that the idea of such divine interventions was older than the days of Xerxes, and that the myth embodying it was ready to fasten itself on anyone who might presume to lay hands on the temples of the gods. In the tradition as related by Plutarch the Delphian temple was not only taken but was plundered and burnt like the Phokian oracle of Abai. This fact, however, is plainly inconsistent with the statement of Herodotos that he himself had seen there the magnificent gifts of earlier ages which bore the names of Gyges and of Kroisos (Crœsus). This statement gives a certain weight to the words of Mardonios; and the inference may be not unwarrantable that the story of the Delphian expedition may be the popular version of a deliberate but unsuccessful effort on the part of a Persian force to pass into Southern Hellas over the Aitolian roads.

Defence of the Athenian Akropolis

The great crisis for which Themistokles had been preparing was now drawing nigh. The fleet of the confederate Greeks was gathered at Salamis; and the country immediately in the path of the invaders had been left desolate. Four months had passed since Xerxes with his army crossed over the bridge on the Hellespont, when he set foot on Attic soil; and thus far he had no great reason to be dissatisfied with the results. He was now to encounter the tactics of a leader whose countrymen were not prepared to follow the example of Thessalians and Boiotians. He found the city without inhabitants, with the exception of a few poor people and the guardians of the temple, who remained on the Akropolis, a rock which rises abruptly to the height of about 150 feet above the surrounding plain and has on its surface

a table land about 900 feet in length by 400 in breadth. Of this little hill one side only was supposed to lie open to attack; and this portion the self-constituted garrison had blocked with wooden palisades, planks, or doors, as they came to hand, not so much from any serious notions of defence as from the wish to carry out to the letter the second response of the Delphian oracle, which Themistokles had interpreted as pointing to the fleet (p. 138). Behind this stockade these poor defenders of an untenable position awaited the attack of the Persian troops stationed on the opposite hill of Ares (Areiopagos, p. 12).

Before this attack was made the descendants of Peisistratos, who had followed in the train of the Persian king, made an attempt to bring about the surrender of the rock without fighting. Standing once again on the land which their fathers had ruled, they looked on themselves as practically repossessed of their old inheritance: and they would naturally have been glad to enter upon it unopposed. But their proposals were treated with contempt, and the attack which followed was for some time ineffectual. Arrows bearing lighted tow were discharged against the fence in vain; but access to the stronghold was discovered in another quarter.

Rejection of the offer made by the Peisistratidai

On the northern side of the rock the chapel of Aglauros the daughter of the dragon-king Kekrops stood at the summit of a fissure, which was in part subterraneous. Up this opening some Persians managed to scramble. On catching sight of them the poor occupants of the rock threw themselves over the precipice, or took refuge as suppliants in the temple of the virgin goddess. The latter obtained but a brief respite. The Persians, having opened the gates to their comrades, burst into the sanctuary and slew all whom they found within it. The plundering of the shrine was followed by the burning of the whole Akropolis. Xerxes was lord of Athens; and a message sent with all speed to Sousa roused in the Persian capital a perfect paroxysm of joy and exultation.

Capture of the Akropolis

The same tidings, borne to the confederates in the Greek

fleet at Salamis, stirred up in them a fever of fear, which threatened to cast all authority to the winds. At no time, probably, had the commanders generally had any serious intention of occupying Salamis permanently as a naval station. If they could cover the migration of the Athenians, that was enough. Thus much they had done, and they now felt themselves justified in consulting their own safety by flight without waiting for the formality of an order. The few, who shrank from such barefaced desertion, assembled in council; but they met only to inforce the same plan. A mere pretence at debate was followed by a resolution to retreat on the coming day and take up their position at the Corinthian isthmus.

Final resolution of the Spartan and Corinthian commanders to retreat to the isthmus

For Themistokles such a decision as this was simply a presage of utter and irretrievable ruin. With him the flimsy plea that at the isthmus they might fall back on the help of the land forces went for nothing. The passes of Tempe and Thermopylai had been successively given up. Thessaly and Boiotia had been abandoned to the partisans of the Persian king. The station at Artemision had been exchanged for that of Salamis: and finally Attica had been left undefended. What warrant was there for the supposition that a further retreat to the isthmus would be followed by greater harmony of councils and steadier fixity of will? Rather, what reasons were there for not concluding that any fresh advantage gained by the Persians would tend to a general dispersion of the forces furnished by the several Peloponnesian cities, on the ground that they must defend their own homes? If Salamis were abandoned, it would be a confession that joint action was no longer to be looked for; and Themistokles was resolved that this decision should not be acted upon, if by any means at his command he should be enabled to prevent it.

Determined opposition of Themistokles

For the incidents immediately following we can but give the traditional narrative as it has been handed down to us, and notice the different versions, when we have more than one account of the same events, forming our own judgement on

the story as a whole. After the return of Themistokles to his ship, an Athenian bearing the very significant name of Mnesiphilos (one who reminds a friend) besought him, we are told, to bring all his powers of persuasion to bear on Eurybiades in order to get the resolution for retreat rescinded. To Mnesiphilos it was clear that retreat meant virtually dispersion, and dispersion meant the complete and final ruin of Greece. Making no reply to his entreaties, Themistokles, it is said, hastened back to the ship of Eurybiades, and by many arguments of his own added to those suggested by Mnesiphilos, prevailed on the Spartan leader to summon a council for the reconsideration of the question.

Traditional narratives of events preceding the battle of Salamis

No sooner had they met than Themistokles, disregarding the formalities with which a debate should be opened, began an eager address, which was interrupted by Adeimantos. The Corinthian chief reminded him that they who rise in the games before the giving of the signal were beaten. 'Yes,' answered Themistokles, 'but they who do not rise when the signal is given are not crowned.' Turning to Eurybiades, he went on now in a different strain, and dwelt no longer on the certainty that retreat to the isthmus would be followed by further dispersion, but insisted only that in his hands and on his action depended the safety of Hellas. At the isthmus, the conditions of the conflict would, he assured him, be wholly to the advantage of the enemy. A conflict in the open sea would be full of danger to their own fewer and heavier ships; and there, too, they would lack the help of the Megarians, Salaminians, and Eginetans, who must remain to protect their own homes. Nor was it a matter of doubt that the advance of the Persian fleet would be attended or followed by an advance of the Persian army. In strange contrast with the language of Athenian commanders of a later day, but with perfect truth according to the circumstances of his own time, he added that a combat in the closed waters between Salamis and the Athenian coast would end probably

Council of the confederate leaders at Salamis

in their winning the victory; and it was beyond dispute that a victory at Salamis would cover the Peloponnesos far more effectually than a victory gained at the isthmus.

Insolent rudeness of Adeimantos to Themistokles

At this point the Corinthian Adeimantos again broke in, it is said, upon his speech, telling him with savage bluntness that, as since the fall of Athens he had no country or city, he was left without a vote in the council, and that it was not in the power of Eurybiades even to take his opinion, much less to follow it. To this brutal rudeness Themistokles quietly opposed a plain denial of his facts. So long as the Athenians had two hundred ships (p. 135), which were able to bear down the resistance of any Greek city, whatever they might do against the Persian power, he had a better city than Adeimantos. But a fleet has the advantage of being able to move from one place to another; and for Eurybiades this power furnished him with a final argument. He warned the Spartan that, if the allies abandoned Salamis, the Athenians would at once sail away with their families and find a new home in Italy in their own city of Siris.

Eurybiades could not deny that without the help of the Athenians it was impossible for the Peloponnesians to offer any effectual resistance to the Persians, and he therefore issued an order for remaining. The preparations for flight were exchanged for preparations for a battle; but their formal obedience failed to raise their courage. Eurybiades must, it seemed to them, have lost his senses; and when on the next day an earthquake was felt by sea and land, their discontent broke out into open murmurs, if not into formal mutiny. Against such opposition it was clear that Eurybiades could not stand out long; and Themistokles saw that everything must be hazarded upon a final throw. With the confederates there was manifestly nothing more to be done; but it might be possible to shut them up in a trap by addressing himself to the Persians.

Order of Eurybiades to prepare for battle

Without losing another moment, he passed quietly from

the council and dispatched Sikinnos, the pedagogue or slave who took his children to and from school, in a boat to the Persian fleet. The message which he carried to the Persian leaders was to the effect that he really desired the victory not of the Greeks but of the Persians, and that on this account he now, without the knowledge of his colleagues, took this means of letting them know that the confederates were on the point of running away, and that in their present state of dismay and disunion they might be crushed almost without an effort. It seems strange that the Persians should have received without suspicion information coming from a man who had cut the inscriptions on the Euboian rocks calling on the Ionians to desert or to remain neutral in any battle in which they might have to take part. In spite of this, we are told that the Persian leaders, putting implicit faith in the message, lost no time in landing a large force on the islet of Psyttaleia (p. 120), for the purpose of saving the wrecks of ships in the coming conflict and of slaying such of the enemy as might be driven upon the island.

Message sent by Themistokles through Sikinnos to the Persian leaders

Towards midnight a portion of the Persian fleet which lay off the open bay of Phaleron began to move along the Attic coast until the line extended to the north-western promontory of Salamis, thus completely shutting in the Greek fleet, which lay between themselves and the north-easterly coast of Salamis. Escape therefore into the bay of Eleusis and a retreat to the isthmus were no longer possible for the Greeks without fighting; and it was with these tidings that Aristeides (p. 120) came to the confederate leaders, who with one exception were still unconscious of this fact, while they wrangled on in fierce and useless debate. We have seen how this news, received at first with suspicion, was confirmed by a Tenian vessel deserting from the Persian fleet. Battle was now inevitable, as Themistokles had resolved that it should be; and as the day dawned, he addressed himself not to the chiefs but to the crews, and putting before them all the motives for action,

Arrival of Aristeides from Egina

lofty and generous, ignoble and selfish, with the intreaty that they should choose the higher, he dismissed them to their work.

That this narrative contains a considerable amount of historical truth, we may very safely maintain; but we cannot fail to mark the contrast which it presents to the story which precedes it. The necessity of winning over his colleagues to his own plans and policy was greater at Salamis than it had been at Artemision. If the means employed at Artemision were not of the most honourable sort, there was not the least reason for greater scrupulousness at Salamis. But the whole history of the Persian war shows that it was thrown into shape by men who were from their ethical convictions irresistibly tempted to put into the mouth of counsellors and advisers thoughts which must necessarily be awakened in the minds of kings and generals without their interference. In this light Mnesiphilos becomes altogether a superfluous personage (pp. 42, 90, 100, 122). It is hard to believe that the resolution of Themistokles himself wavered, that it was fixed by the remonstrance of a friend, and that the failing firmness of the leader who had marked out his line of action and kept to it with inflexible pertinacity needed the support of one who suggests nothing with which Themistokles had not all along been familiar, and from whom Themistokles hears only the arguments which he had just been himself urging in the council chamber.

The counsel of Mnesiphilos

Mnesiphilos therefore appears simply, as he has been called, the 'inspiring genius' of Themistokles, or rather, we may say, as his personified opinion. His name, as we have seen, has no other meaning; and of the man, if he ever lived, we have no knowledge whatever. He appears here for the sole purpose of sending Themistokles back to Eurybiades. We never hear of him again; and to the one solitary speech which he addresses to the great Athenian leader, the latter vouchsafes no reply. Mnesiphilos is simply the embodiment of one thought in the mind of Themistokles, and he is nothing more.

The personified opinion of Themistokles

Still more strange is the persistency with which in the discussions before the fight at Salamis Themistokles confines himself to merely verbal arguments. Scruples of conscience alone (and these he is supposed not to have felt) could have prevented him from resorting again to the bribery which he had effectually employed before. If it was a matter of importance for him to do so off Euboia, it was of nothing less than vital moment at Salamis. In this supreme difficulty his ready wit devises a stratagem for compelling the action of the allies, so soon as he finds that prayers, warnings, and intreaties are useless; but to our surprise we find that the device which he hits upon has nothing to do with bribery. He is still, for all that we are told to the contrary, in possession of two and twenty talents, the harvest of corruption; and his chief opponent is the Corinthian Adeimantos, on whom three talents had exercised a potent influence at Artemision. It was certainly a time which furnished a far greater excuse or even justification for employing the argument of gold; and this argument might have been tried probably with not less chance of success.

Difficulties connected with the subject of bribery

So again, in the story of Sikinnos, the trick of Themistokles is successful; but it is not easy to reconcile the several accounts given of it. According to the contemporary poet Æschylos, a Greek whom he does not name, and who therefore may have been Themistokles himself, goes not to the Persian generals but to Xerxes, and tells him that the Greeks are resolved on immediate flight; and Xerxes, on hearing this, charges his admirals, on penalty of losing their heads if they fail, to hem them in after nightfall with a triple line of ships and so to catch them like vermin in a snare. Æschylos, it is true, ascribes this order of Xerxes to ignorance of the trick which was being played upon him by the Greek, whoever he was, and to his unconsciousness that the gods were watching him with feelings of jealousy; but we have to remember that in no case could the device of Themistokles do more than hasten the course of events by a few hours.

The embassy of Sikinnos

The strait between the north-western promontory of Salamis and the opposite coast of Attica is only about half a mile in width; and Xerxes could scarcely need the advice of a Greek, or any advice at all, to guard an outlet which he could block so easily. He had come with the definite purpose of fighting; and whether he had received any message or not, the movement needed to prevent the escape of the enemy would have been carried out in a few hours. But the delay of a few hours would have given the Peloponnesians time to effect their retreat to the isthmus; and it was enough for the purpose of Themistokles if the movement could be just so far hastened as to render this retreat impossible. It is strange, however, that the orator Isokrates seems to know nothing of the stratagem of Themistokles, and we have seen that Herodotos was unaware that the sentence of banishment against Aristeides had been revoked before he came to inform his rival that the Greeks must either fight where they were, or surrender (p. 120).

Purposes of Xerxes and Themistokles

From a great throne raised on the spurs of mount Aigaleos the Persian despot looked down on the Salaminian waters to see how his slaves fought on his behalf. In the narrow strait before him his Phenician mariners, stationed towards Eleusis and the west, faced the ships of the Athenians, while the Ionians towards the east and the Persians confronted the Spartans and their allies; and so began this memorable conflict, of which beyond this general arrangement the historian himself admits that we know practically nothing. The numbers of ships engaged on both sides are subjects of controversy; but the difficulty in ascertaining the precise numbers of the Greek fleet is only such as we might fairly look for, if, as it would seem, there was no strict registration. On the Persian side the problem assumes a different form. For once, at least, Oriental exaggeration has not been allowed to put out of sight an historical fact of no small interest; and we are enabled to ascertain the number of Greek vessels in the service of Xerxes.

The battle of Salamis

According to the tragic poet Æschylos, who fought in the

battle, the whole fleet of the Persian despot consisted of a thousand ships. This round number, denoting the boundlessness of his resources, is what we should naturally look for: but we should not look for the definite statement that the ships in his fleet noted for their swift sailing amounted to precisely 207. By whom were these ships furnished? and why should we have such a total as this in lists which are made up of round numbers? To these questions the drama of Æschylos furnishes no answer; but, from Herodotos, who does not sum up the total, we learn that the Asiatic Ionians contributed 100 ships to the Persian navy, the Eolians 60, the Dorians 30, and the islanders 17, and here we have precisely the 207 fast-sailing ships in the drama of Æschylos. Not only do the poet and the historian confirm each other, but their statements bring out further the fact that not even Phenician ship-builders could produce vessels with the sailing properties of the Greek ships.

Number of Greek ships in the Persian fleet

According to Herodotos the issue of the fight of Salamis was determined by the discipline and order of the Greeks, and by the confusion of their enemies, who fell out of their ranks and did nothing wisely; but if the popular story may be trusted, some allowance must be made for the fact that the Persian seamen had been working all night, carrying out the movements for the complete surrounding and destruction of the whole Greek fleet, while the Greeks went on board their ships on the morning of the fight, fresh from sleep and animated by the stirring eloquence of Themistokles. But in spite of the general lack of information of which he complains Herodotos notes first that the Persians, as a whole, fought better at Salamis than at Artemision, perhaps as thinking that the eyes of the king watched each man personally, and secondly that the Ionians in his service did not follow the advice given to them by Themistokles by means of the inscriptions cut on the Euboian rocks.

Defeat of the Persians

According to his version they showed no small zeal in the conflict, capturing many of the ships of the allied fleet. If this fact be true, it would seem to show that the desertion of the

Athenians and Spartans in the revolt of Aristagoras (p. 92) still rankled in their minds and blinded them to the shame of revenge taken under circumstances which threatened utter ruin to the Western and Eastern Greeks alike. But this tale is, to say the least, not beyond suspicion. It is, indeed, contradicted by the tradition of the charge which in the thick of the fight the Phenicians brought against these Asiatic Greeks. The accusation was that they had destroyed the Phenician ships and betrayed the Phenicians themselves. If this charge was really made, the general character of the Phenician seamen would justify the suspicion that it was not altogether groundless.

Conduct of the Greeks in the service of Xerxes

The issue of the battle was as decisive at Salamis as it had been at Marathon. The anticipations of Themistokles (p. 158) were amply realised. The Persian fleet was practically ruined, and the slaughter of their troops was frightful, while the loss of the Greeks is represented as insignificant. The conflict was to all intents and purposes ended before the massacre in the islet of Psyttaleia (p. 121): but in spite of the completeness of their victory the Greeks still ascribed to the Persian king a power of resistance in which he himself had cast away all faith. They fully expected, we are told, that on the coming day they would have to fight another battle. But that very night the Persian fleet sailed from the scene of the great catastrophe to guard the bridge across the Hellespont for the passage of the king and his army. The discovery of its flight was followed by immediate pursuit. But the Greeks had sailed as far as Andros before they caught sight of the hindermost of the Persian ships.

Retreat of the Persian ships

At Andros a council was held, in which Themistokles, it is said, insisted that they ought to sail at once to the Hellespont and break up the bridge. He was opposed by Eurybiades, who pointed out the folly of driving to bay a defeated enemy. Xerxes, he urged, was hurrying away from Europe, and out of Europe he could do them little harm; but if his retreat were cut off, he might turn with some faint trace of the spirit of Cyrus and take

Council of the Greek leaders at Andros

vengeance for his recent disasters, while his forces could be sustained with the yearly harvests of Hellas. If these last arguments were urged, they tell little for the sound sense or experience of the speaker. Nations suffering under permanent or yearly repeated invasions cease to till or sow their ground; and the resources of such a country as Greece would be ludicrously inadequate for the support of the Persian armies, whatever be the deductions made from the numbers given.

Alleged advice of Themistokles to the Athenians

Silenced, we are told, by this rejoinder, Themistokles contented himself with repeating to his countrymen the advice of Eurybiades, and begging them to turn their minds to the more pressing need of rebuilding their houses and sowing the seed for the next year's crops. But it is clear, again, that he could not at this time have urged this duty upon them. The Persian fleet was gone; but the Persian king with all his army was still in Attica, and betrayed as yet no intention of quitting it. Of Xerxes himself he probably spoke, as he is said to have spoken, as an impious man whose pride had wearied out the patience of the gods and provoked their wrath by profaning and burning their shrines.

Synchronism of the battles of Salamis and Himera

This feeling found its strongest expression in the synchronism which assigned to the same days events which may have been separated from each other by short intervals of time. Thus the struggle was going on in the pass of Thermopylai while the Greek fleet was fighting at Artemision. Thus also at the moment when the confederates were breaking the Persian power by sea at Salamis, the Syracusan tyrant Gelon was destroying the Carthaginian army of Hamilkar at the Sicilian Himera; and thus also we shall see again that the catastrophe of Mardonios at Plataia happens on the very day on which the confederate Greeks break in pieces the Persian fleet at Mykalê. We must not, however, forget that there was another version which made the battle of Himera synchronise not with that of Salamis but with the struggle in Thermopylai. The variation shows at least that we are walking on very loose ground.

Having given the Athenians this advice, Themistokles, we are told, sent Sikinnos on a second embassy; but this time his message was addressed to Xerxes, not to his generals, and it informed him that the Greeks had wished to chase his fleet and destroy the bridge at the Hellespont, but that Themistokles had turned them from their purpose and insured to him, if he wished to go home, a peaceful and leisurely retreat. The historian at this point so far anticipates the sequel of the life of Themistokles as to say that both his counsel to his countrymen and his message to the Persian king were prompted by a deliberate design of establishing a title to the favour of the latter, if the need of so doing should at any time arise. With this question we are not for the present concerned; nor need we say anything about the glaring falsehood of the message. Themistokles is described as a man not troubled by many or serious scruples of conscience; but even if we look upon him as one ready to lie whenever a lie seemed likely to be profitable, we have yet to consider the effect which this second message, if really sent, was likely to have upon Xerxes.

Second embassy of Sikinnos to Xerxes

Human nature is much the same in all ages; and the child who has learnt to dread the fire by being burnt is sufficiently cautious in handling it. Even a stupid savage is not likely to be trapped twice in the same snare by the same man; and for Xerxes the fact stared him in the face that he had already acted upon one message from Themistokles and that the result had been the ruin of his fleet. What else could he possibly suppose than that this second message was sent to insure his own destruction and that of his land army? We have not the smallest reason for thinking that this message would have the effect even of hastening his flight. The bitter experience of Salamis could only lead him to interpret the words of Themistokles by contraries, and convince him that, if he acted upon them, it would be simply to find when he reached the Hellespont that the means for crossing it were not forthcoming, that the strait was filled with the

Probable effect of the alleged second message of Themistokles

enemy's ships, and that no time had been allowed for making any preparations to shelter and guard his army in a hostile country. It cannot be said that he had had time to forget the disaster to his fleet. It had happened only a few hours ago; and in a mind like his the memory of this deadly wrong would be fixed with a strength which no lapse of time could weaken.

But the message is in truth as superfluous as the advice of Mnesiphilos (pp. 42, 90, 92, 100, 122, 161). The tyrant, as it so happens, had resolved to remain no longer in Europe. But this fact was not yet known to Themistokles: nor could the idea of cutting off his retreat at the Hellespont have even crossed his mind, so long as the Persian host lay encamped on Greek soil; and even after he had ascertained that Xerxes had with a chosen bodyguard already taken the road which was to lead him back to Asia, no such plan could have appeared to him practicable. He would know that the departure of the king with a useless train of non-combatants increased, instead of lessening, the perils of the confederate Greeks. He would soon learn that the throng which had retreated with the king was a rabble which had been to his generals only a hindrance and a clog; and he would feel no temptation to underrate the strength and bravery of the genuine Persian warriors.

Effects of the retreat of Xerxes

The tidings that the king had departed would be soon followed by the startling news that Mardonios remained in Boiotia, and that he remained with a picked army, whose chief danger lay in the fact that it was still far too large. In short, Themistokles would know that Xerxes in leaving with Mardonios his native Persian troops was leaving behind him the hardy soldiers on whom the very foundations of his empire rested, and that his true policy was not to cut off their retreat, as in the council at Andros he is said to have advised, or to send to Xerxes a second message which he would not fail to interpret by contraries.

Strength of the troops under Mardonios in Boiotia

But while Themistokles is described as unscrupulous, he

is nowhere represented as short-sighted or foolish. The conduct ascribed to him after the flight of the Persian ships is marked by extreme confidence and extreme rashness. The dark cloud of invasion which had long brooded over Hellas was not dispersed, nor was even its gloom abated, so long as Mardonios remained to carry on the work. To leave the latter unmolested for the sake of making an attempt to intercept a terror-stricken fugitive would be an act of sheer madness; and as no such charge has been urged against Themistokles, it follows that no such plan was proposed by him and therefore that it could not be rejected by Eurybiades.

Foresight of Themistokles

Nor are we on entirely sure ground, when we turn to the operations of the Greek fleet after the battle of Salamis. These operations show clearly that the aim of the Greek commanders was not to encounter useless risks by attempts to cut off the retreat of Xerxes at the Hellespont, but to provide for the costs of the war by the forced or voluntary contributions of Hellenic cities. The assessments made may have been unjust or excessive; but in levying them the Athenians and Spartans were beyond doubt engaged in a joint work for a recognised purpose. But the narrative of incidents is not unlike the story of Miltiades after the battle of Marathon (p. 115). As Miltiades fails at Paros, so Themistokles fails at Andros. The difference between them is that Miltiades chose to wrap his enterprise in mystery and so took the whole responsibility on himself personally, while Themistokles acted as spokesman for the allies in general.

Raising of supplies for carrying on the war

As such, he told the Andrians that the allies had come to their island under the guidance of two very mighty deities, Necessity and Faith (the latter word meaning here the power which produces obedience). They must therefore pay the sums demanded of them. On their part the Andrians urged that they likewise had two deities, Poverty and Helplessness, which would never leave them and whose troublesome presence made it impossible for them to pay

Siege of Andros

anything. This refusal was followed by a blockade which, it is said, verified the assertion of the Andrians that the power of the Athenians could not exceed their own impotence, but which rather proved that in the art of siege the skill of the Athenians was still poor. Foiled in the blockade, the Greeks betook themselves to Euboia, where they ravaged the land of Karystos, at the southern extremity of that island, and then sailed back to Salamis.

If these last facts be historical, they refute the story that Themistokles had already extorted large sums from the Karystians and Parians, under the pledge, we must assume, that these payments should save them from further exactions. We are, however, also told that while the siege of Andros was still going on, Themistokles, by threatening the other islands with summary measures in case of refusal, extorted large sums of money without the knowledge of his colleagues and kept them all for himself. The charge is altogether beyond belief. Themistokles and the agents of his extortions might keep their secret: but there was nothing to stop the mouths of his victims, and Athens was not so popular as to make her allies deaf to charges which accused Themistokles of crippling their resources for his own private advantage. If this systematic robbery had been an historical fact, Sparta and Corinth at least would have rung with cries of indignation, not so much at the wrong done to the islanders as at the spoliation of the confederates in whose name he had cheated them. The worthlessness of the charge may be inferred from the candid admission of Herodotos that with the exception of Paros and Karystos he could not assert that any other city paid anything, although he thinks that some may have done so. We have, therefore, thus far nothing to show that Themistokles had added to that mysterious hoard of two and twenty talents, of which he had failed to make use in more than one supreme crisis.

Alleged extortions of Themistokles.

One other question, we are told, was decided at the Corinthian isthmus before the close of this memorable year:

and this was the question of personal merit in the war. By their written votes each of the generals is said to have claimed the first place for himself, while most of them (according to Plutarch all) assigned the second to Themistokles. The superiority of Themistokles was amply vindicated; but the incredibly silly vanity which, if the tale be true, thus deprived him of his formal preeminence in no way impaired his glory or interfered with the honours paid to him. As commander in chief, Eurybiades received an olive-crown; but the same prize was bestowed on Themistokles also on the expressed ground of his unparalleled wisdom and dexterity. A beautiful chariot, the gift of the citizens, conveyed him from the city of Sparta, three hundred chosen Spartiatai escorting him to the boundaries of Tegea. No other stranger, it is said, ever received such honours from the cold and austere chiefs of the Dorian race of Greeks.

Honours paid to Themistokles at Sparta

With this triumphant progress from Sparta the figure of Themistokles passes under a cloud; nor does the mist which veils him from our eyes disperse until the Athenians, having conveyed their households back from Salamis, were ready to begin the work of restoring their ruined city and of cultivating their wasted lands. But as soon as the way is opened for the accomplishment of his life's task, we see him adapting means to ends with all his old sagacity and firmness. In the momentous struggle which, so far as western or European Greece was concerned, had been brought to an end, the Spartans may not have played a part so poor and shabby as that which Athenian tradition ascribed to them. But the old vices of tribal disunion and jealousy had never been more than veiled, and they now displayed in larger measure their powers of mischief.

Later life of Themistokles

The historian Thucydides represents the Corinthians, nearly half a century later, as expressing their conviction that the Persian invaders had made shipwreck by their lack of order and military discipline, and that thus the catastrophe in which their enterprise ended

Causes of the defeat of the Persians

was mainly of their own causing but it may be doubted whether either the Corinthians or the Spartans who saw and took part in the great conflict were far-seeing enough to measure the risk which they would have run, if with a better military system the Persians had been animated by the western spirit of a voluntary obedience to law.

Opposition of the Spartans to the rebuilding of the walls of Athens

The danger of Persian conquest in Europe was now practically at an end; but the Spartans still spoke and acted as though the chances of Persian aggression should determine the relation of the Peloponnesian cities with those which lay beyond the isthmus. Sparta had no walls; and a wall of sufficient strength across the isthmus would guard all the cities within the peninsula. The fortifications of Thebes had greatly furthered the cause of the barbarians; therefore, to prevent a recurrence of the same mischief, no extra-Peloponnesian city ought to have walls. Hence when they heard of preparations for rebuilding the walls of Athens, they hurried to the conclusion that a people who had submitted to so many losses in the common cause would be easily induced to forego what the Spartans affected to regard as a luxury for thieves and marauders rather than as a necessity for honest freemen.

Indispensable need of walls for Athens

Such notions as these went for nothing with Themistokles. He had made up his mind that Athens must be great: and he knew that she could not be great unless she were wealthy. For various reasons Athens had long ago attracted to itself a large proportion of foreigners whose capital and skilled workmanship had done much towards enriching the country. This population had been scattered by the storm of Persian invasion; and if Athens was to rise from her fallen condition, it was of the utmost importance that these Metoikoi, or resident foreigners, should be induced to return. The temporary remission of the Metoikion, or tax imposed on such foreign residents, might do something towards the attainment of this end; but it would not go far so long as security for property was wanting, and under all conditions of life then known it was absurd to

look for such security in an unwalled town. Hence for the sake of her trade and commerce as well as of her navy Athens must not only be fortified but must have an impregnable harbour; and Themistokles set himself to supply both these wants with the quiet resolution which in most cases carries a man over all obstacles.

Mission of Themistokles and Aristeides to Sparta, 479 B.C.

To the request of the Spartans that the Athenians should not only not rebuild their own walls but join them in pulling down the walls of all other cities to the north of the Corinthian isthmus, he returned no answer; but he advised his countrymen to dismiss the Spartan envoys with the promise that they would send their own ambassadors to Sparta to discuss the matter. At his own wish Themistokles was intrusted with this mission, his colleagues being Abronychos and his former rival and opponent Aristeides (479 B.C.). As he set out on his errand, he charged the Athenians to strain every nerve in the indispensable work before them, and not to send his colleagues until the walls had reached a height which could enable them to bid defiance to all attacks. Young and old, women and children, must give their help to the utmost of their power; nor must anything be spared to supply the necessary material. Without walls the gods would have neither worshippers nor offerings for their temples: therefore they must not grudge the stones of their temples for the achievement of this task. The walls must, in short, rise as if by the speed of magic, and to insure this end everything else might be thrown down.

Skilful negotiations of Themistokles

Meanwhile, during the progress of this work at Athens, Themistokles had to deal at Sparta with a delicate problem, which called for the exercise of all his inborn dexterity. Declining all official audiences, he expressed himself in private as expecting the early arrival of his colleagues. The kindly feeling still entertained by the Spartans for the victor of Salamis won a ready acceptance for this excuse; but it underwent a severe strain when tidings came, in all likelihood from the Eginetans, that the

walls of Athens had been already raised to a considerable height. Themistokles denied the statement, but told them that, if they doubted his words, they had better send their own envoys to ascertain the exact state of things. Before these envoys could reach Athens, Themistokles had charged the Athenians to detain them until he himself, with his colleagues who had now joined him, should have returned home.

Having learnt that these Spartan ambassadors were in safe keeping as hostages for his own safety and that of Abronychos and Aristeides, he came forward boldly and made to the Spartan Ephors a full confession of his motives and his plans. Athens, he told them, was now protected by walls high enough to justify her citizens in undergoing a blockade without fear; and his city had a perfect right to this protection, unless the right was to be denied to every other Greek city, be it in the Peloponnesos or beyond its limits. Freedom of speech and independence of action would alike be impossible, if any one member of the confederacy stood at an advantage over the rest; and if for a time Athens had been left without walls, it was only because she had chosen to suffer all that could befall her rather than be faithless to the common cause. Athens, moreover, he argued, had done nothing to forfeit her independence; and as the allies, if thwarted by Athens, would assuredly claim for themselves perfect freedom of counsel and action, they must extend the same privilege to her.

Open assertion of his policy and purpose

Themistokles had, in short, done what he wanted to do. If the Spartans had sought to hoodwink the Athenians, they had been fairly caught in their own trap. They had professed to offer nothing more than friendly advice; and they could not with reason or in decency express anger because this advice was not followed. The ambassadors on each side returned to their several homes without a formal recall; but the Spartans secretly fostered the resentment to which they could not give open expression. On his return to Athens Themistokles found the whole city walled in, not indeed to the height which he

Resentment of the Spartans

had desired; but the half of what he had hoped for had been accomplished, and the main work of his life was done.

Such is the narrative in which Thucydides traces the course of these events. It is a perfectly coherent and consistent tale, in which we find not a hint of bribery or corruption. But there was another, probably a more modern, version of the story which represented Themistokles as bribing the Spartan Ephors into connivance with his plans. The absurdity of the supposition may enable us to estimate the value of these charges of corruption in those instances in which they are urged with greater plausibility. The Ephors would in all likelihood belong to those Spartan families whose jealousy and dislike of Athens would be most obstinate: and it is not easy to think that a whole board of magistrates would be open to bribery. No such charge was ever brought against the whole body of Athenian archons.

Alleged bribing of the Ephors by Themistokles

But in the conflict with Xerxes Athens had been saved not by any defences of stone, but by the wooden walls of her ships; and Themistokles, to whom preeminently they were indebted for this safety, now insisted that nothing must be left undone to make her navy irresistible. For the Athens which lay more than four miles from the nearest point on the sea coast he manifestly cared but little; and there can be no doubt that he would have preferred to abandon it altogether. Twice within a single year its inhabitants had been compelled to leave their homes and seek refuge elsewhere. Such forced migrations must be fatal to the steady growth of the city and country in wealth and prosperity; but the Athenians would always be liable to the recurrence of the calamity, so long as they remained in a spot where they could not at once fall back upon their fleet. The most effectual way of insuring this condition would be to abandon the old city with all its sacred and time-honoured associations: but it was just these associations which rendered the acceptance of any such suggestion hopeless. Some other method must be devised for attaining the end which he

Athens and the Persians

had most at heart. If Athens could not be brought to the sea, the sea must be practically brought to Athens; and this could be done by making the ancient city one with the new city which would, he foresaw, rise on the shores of the great harbour of Peiraieus.

For this purpose he regarded the open bay of Phaleron as worthless. But Peiraieus had with Mounychia three havens, and all these were now by his advice inclosed within a wall nearly seven miles in circuit. This wall was to be made so nearly impregnable that old men and children might serve to guard it even in time of war; and in the vast inclosed space the Athenians might leave their families in perfect safety, instead of seeking, as they had lately sought, a precarious and uncertain refuge elsewhere. The wall was raised only to half the intended height; but even thus it amply sufficed for its purpose. Its width, we are told, was such that two carts could cross each other, depositing stones on the outer side of each, leaving between the two walls thus raised a space which was filled up with large squared stones clamped together with lead and iron. The ruins of this mighty rampart still bear out the accuracy of the historian's description.

Fortification of the Peiraieus

As before the Persian invasion, so now, the two foremost men in Athens were Themistokles and Aristeides. But their relative positions had greatly changed. The latter, as we have seen, had learnt the lessons inforced by the altered conditions of the age (pp. 123, 124), and he had proposed and carried reforms from which the Eupatrids of the days of Solon would have shrunk with horror. But how far the reputation which Aristeides enjoyed among his friends reflected the opinion of the people generally, we have no means of determining. The question is not whether he was highly esteemed by a considerable body among the Athenians, but whether he was equally valued by all. The same questions must be put with reference to Themistokles; and if the answer be that in each case there were some who suspected, feared, or hated them

Measure of popularity enjoyed by Themistokles and Aristeides

then we have to ascertain, if it be possible, who these persons were and what may have been their motives.

Testimony of Diodoros

Now, if the universal popularity of Aristeides seems to be implied (it is nowhere distinctly stated) in the stories told of the later years of Themistokles, it is altogether inconsistent with the words in which Diodoros speaks of the singular love felt for the latter by the main body of the citizens. It is true that Diodoros says in the same passage that partly through fear and partly from envy the Athenians forgot the good services and eagerly sought the humiliation of the conqueror of Salamis: but as it is certain that some Athenians retained their love for him to the end, we have to determine whether the successive sentences of Diodoros apply to the same or to different bodies or parties among the Athenian citizens. It is not only possible but likely that this fear and jealousy may have been felt not by the people at large but by a faction which set itself first to humiliate him and then to blacken his memory.

Comparison with early Roman history

This is a question of supreme importance for those who have at heart the cause of historical truth: and any evidence which throws light upon it must be carefully and dispassionately weighed. The controversies and feuds of early Roman history point to a condition of things in many points resembling that of Attica before the days of Solon. In Rome as at Athens there was a Patrician or Eupatrid order which regarded the admission of plebeians to any share in the work of government as a profanation and an impiety; and in both states there were a few men of this exalted order who saw that their ascendency could not be maintained permanently if they stood absolutely still and refused altogether to move with the times. In both cities these reformers incurred the hatred of all whose minds were fixed on the one purpose of handing down their privileges unimpaired. In both the latter were necessarily, from their wealth, their education, and their power, able to shape and colour the historical traditions of their age far more effectually than the struggling commonalty on whom they looked

down as rabble (p. 23). In Rome more than in Athens the historians, such as they were, were partisans of the Eupatrid or Patrician order, and accepted without question the verdict of that order in the cases of men like Spurius Cassius and Spurius Mælius. Of these two men the former was a patrician, the latter a plebeian: Mælius was murdered, and his birth did not save Cassius from the same fate. The case of Mælius is a singularly black one, and it has been well said that the whole evidence, even as handed down by patrician chroniclers, leads us irresistibly to look upon the murdered plebeian as the victim of a party which, with a haughty contempt of justice, made use of any weapon, however dishonourable, in a base endeavour to evade or violate the law, a party which was not ashamed to extol bloody crimes committed in its interest and to stigmatise its murdered enemies in their graves as traitors or common criminals.

It is impossible to put out of sight these points of likeness between Roman traditions and those which profess to lay before us the career of Themistokles. The tale must, however, be told as it has been handed down to us by those who had the putting together of records the chronology of which is by no means clear. At Sparta Themistokles after the battle of Salamis was welcomed and dismissed with such honours as in that city, we are told, no other stranger ever received. But we have seen that the determination with which he insisted on the right of his countrymen to fortify their city and manage their own affairs soon turned their admiration into dislike and even hatred; nor was their diligence in spying out the weak points of his conduct surpassed by that of some who were watching him in Athens.

Traditions of the later life of Themistokles

These men seem to have spent their time in bringing forward against him a series of charges, some of them ridiculous, some insignificant, one or two accusing him of very serious crimes. Among the earliest was the statement that he had dedicated near his own house a chapel to Artemis Aristoboulê, the goddess of good counsel, a

Charges brought against Themistokles

deity for whose gifts they would rather have done well to become suppliants themselves. He was then charged with speaking much of the good services which he had rendered to Athens; but lack of good taste may have been a fault not confined to Themistokles only. He was stigmatised as a lying and corrupt traitor by the Rhodian poet Timokreon (p. 119); but such indictments were not likely to carry much weight. The case became more serious when he was pointed out by the Spartans as an accomplice in the treachery of Pausanias, the Peloponnesian leader at the battle of Plataia. But if we may believe Diodoros (and here he could scarcely err from dulness or stupidity), the Spartans acted from a mere feeling of resentment or jealousy. The conduct of Pausanias had reflected deep disgrace on the city which he represented at Byzantion, while no Athenian general had been tried or condemned for either Medism (p. 186) or more downright treason. They were resolved therefore that the balance should be redressed, and that the charge of treachery should be retorted on Themistokles as a man who had attained a dangerous preeminence. Diodoros adds that the Spartans bribed his enemies at Athens to support this accusation.

Themistokles, it would seem, was formally arraigned, and triumphantly acquitted. For the present he was more popular than ever; nor can it be said that his popularity was short-lived. Nine years had passed away from the time of his victory at Salamis, and he was still living at Athens, admired and loved, or feared and hated, when his opponents proposed to apply the remedy of ostracism. An adverse vote involved his exile, 471 B.C.; but, as we have seen (p. 68), this fact proves nothing more than that six thousand citizens wished to be rid of his presence. It does not prove that there were not four and twenty thousand more who deplored his banishment.

Ostracism of Themistokles, 471 B.C.

Leaving the city, whose maritime supremacy was his own creation, he betook himself to Argos. But the Spartans had undertaken the task of hunting him down, and during his sojourn they renewed the old charge with increased perti-

nacity. Pausanias had been dead now for more than ten years; and the fact that no fresh evidence was forthcoming speaks volumes for the motives of his accusers. They succeeded, however, in obtaining an order for his arrest at Athens, and Themistokles on receiving the tidings fled to Korkyra (Corcyra), an island over which he is said, for whatever reason, to have had the claims of a benefactor. Unable to defend him and unwilling to give him up, the islanders conveyed him to the mainland, where he found himself driven to enter the house of the Molossian chief Admetos, to whom he had in times past, we know not how, given some cause of offence.

Flight from Argos to Korkyra (Corcyra)

Admetos was not at home: but placing her child in his arms, his wife told him to take his place as a suppliant at the hearth. On the return of the chief Themistokles put before him candidly the exact state of his fortunes, and Admetos, generously forgiving the old wrong, conveyed him to Pydna, a stronghold of the Makedonian prince Alexandros (p. 121). At Pydna he took passage in a merchant ship going to Ionia; but a storm carried the vessel to Naxos, which was then being besieged by an Athenian force. Revealing himself to the captain, Themistokles, it is said, threatened to charge him with sheltering traitors for a bribe, unless he kept his men from landing until the weather should allow them to go on their way. In about thirty-six hours the wind lulled, and the ship sailed to Ephesos. Journeying thence into the interior, he sent to Artaxerxes, who had just succeeded his father Xerxes, a letter thus worded:—

Further flight to Thessaly and Asia Minor, 466 B.C.

'I, Themistokles, have come to thee,—the man who has done most harm to thy house while I was compelled to resist thy father, but who also did him most good by withholding the Greeks from destroying the bridge over the Hellespont while he was journeying from Attica to Asia; and now I am here, able to do thee much good, but persecuted by the Greeks on the score of my good will to thee. But I wish to tarry a year and then to talk with thee about mine errand.'

The young king, the story goes on to say, at once granted his request; and when Themistokles, having spent the year in thoroughly learning Persian, went up to the court, he acquired over the monarch an almost unbounded influence. After a time, the length of which is not stated, he returned to Asia Minor, to do what might be needed to fulfil his promise to the king, that he would make him, as his father wished to be, lord of all Hellas. Here he lived in great magnificence, having three cities, Magnesia, Lampsakos, and Myous, to supply him with bread, wine, and vegetables. At Magnesia, so the story goes, he died, either from disease or from a draught of bull's blood which he drank because he knew that he could not bring about what he had undertaken to accomplish for the king. His bones were brought away by his kinsfolk, and buried secretly in Attica, because the bones of a traitor had no right to the soil which he betrayed; but the Magnesians would have it that they still lay in their market-place in the splendid sepulchre which they exhibited as his tomb.

Traditions of the sojourn of Themistokles in Persia

Such, it may be said, was the authorised, and perhaps after the lapse of some twenty or thirty years after his death, the most widely accepted, form of the story of the great statesman's later years. But there were other versions which stand out significantly in contradiction to it. Of these one related that instead of regarding him as a benefactor of the royal house the Persian king had put a price of two hundred talents upon his head. Another stated that when Themistokles reached Ionia, he found it impossible to get to Sousa except by availing himself of the offer of Lysitheides, who, pretending that he was conveying to the palace a stranger for the king's harem, brought thither in this strange disguise the founder of the maritime empire of Athens. Another tradition tells us that Mandane, the sister of Xerxes, demanded the surrender of Themistokles in order that she might wreak upon him her wrath for the death of her sons who had fallen at Salamis; that he was actually

Inconsistency of these traditions

put upon his trial to answer the accusations of Mandane; and that owing to the skill which he had acquired in the use of the Persian language he was triumphantly acquitted. By way of illustrating more vividly these changes in his life, other stories were framed which exhibited him as undergoing instruction in the methods of Oriental prostration, or which represented the Persian king as unable to sleep for excess of joy at having Themistokles the Athenian in his possession and as bestowing upon him a beautiful Persian wife by way of showing his gratitude for past benefits and his confidence for the future.

Judgment of Thucydides

These various traditions for the most part exclude each other. But the one first given is supposed to have the general sanction or approval of the historian Thucydides. What, then, in reference to these stories is the value of the judgement of Thucydides? That few historians have surpassed him in his power of weighing and sifting the evidence of living witnesses is beyond question. So far as examination and cross-examination could carry him, he spared no pains in getting at the truth of facts; but his own task lay in the region of contemporary history, and was only indirectly concerned with written documents or with written literature in any shape. Over such documents he failed to exercise the vigilance with which he scrutinised oral testimony; and we have therefore to supply his shortcomings, if we would avoid doing injustice to a man with whose character slander has beyond doubt been more than usually busy.

Popularity of Themistokles amongst the Athenian citizens generally

It cannot, however, be said that Thucydides was the contemporary of Themistokles, who died probably during the year in which he was born; and in the review which he has given us of his career the absence of all evidence tending to show that the people generally approved of the judgement passed upon him by his opponents is especially striking. Nay, in all the accounts handed down to us (and not one comes from any contemporary writer), there is not a word to show that the common people shared the opinions of the knot of his

persecutors, while many expressions show the strength of their affection for him. Nearly a quarter of a century had passed from the time of his ostracism, before Thucydides was old enough to form any judgement on his life and character, and during this period the enemies of Themistokles had done their best to heighten the prejudice which is fed by exaggerated contrasts. Themistokles began life in poverty: he closed it in wealth and dishonour. Aristeides was preeminent for the purity of his motives, and his justice was proved, it is said, by the absolute want which left his family dependent on the public bounty. A bribe for Aristeides had no temptation; but the lust of gold explained in Themistokles the simultaneous action of contradictory motives such as perhaps no other man ever exhibited.

When mud is thrown in large quantities, some of it is sure to stick; and the charges of corruption multiplied against Themistokles were taken, without evidence, by his political opponents as proof that he was prepared to undo the work of his whole life for the sake of that of which he had already an abundance. What his wealth may have been before his ostracism, we cannot say. We have traced, so far as our power goes, the history of the thirty talents bestowed upon him by the Euboians at Artemision (p. 145); and the two and twenty talents which, if he received this bribe, remained after the sums spent on Eurybiades and Adeimantos, may have formed part or the main bulk of the sum which his friends conveyed to him in Asia both from Athens and from Argos. Even if we put aside the stories of vast riches which his friends were unable to take away from Attica, lack of money can scarcely be regarded as furnishing for him a sufficient motive to crime.

Multiplied charges of corruption

Yet it is greed of gain, and this alone, which is said to have determined all his actions after his flight from Argos, the result being a deliberate but contemptibly unsuccessful attempt to undo the work of his whole political life. What this work was we have seen perhaps with sufficient clearness. So great had been the impulse imparted by him to

Facts of the case

Athenian enterprise, so thoroughly had it strengthened the character of the poorer citizens, that his rival Aristeides gave his aid in carrying out that maritime policy which at the outset he had opposed. In this business of his life he had displayed a rapidity of perception which, in the opinion of Thucydides, gave to his maturest judgements the appearance of intuition, a fertility of resource and a readiness in action which never failed him under any difficulties. He had shown a courage rising steadily in proportion to the dangers which he had to face; and he had kept those about him true in some degree to the common cause, when a blind and stupid terror seemed to make all possibility of united action hopeless.

Conclusions involved in the charges brought against him

It is of such a man as this that we are asked to believe not that he had been poor and became rich, not that he had an eye to his own comfort as well as to the welfare of his country, but that almost from the beginning, at all events from a time preceding the battle of Salamis, he distinctly contemplated the prospect of knocking to pieces the fabric which he was laboriously building up, and of seeking a home in the palace of the king on whose power and schemes he was first to deal a deadly blow. With a wonderful assurance we are asked to believe that at the very time when with astonishing strength of will he was driving the allies into a battle which they dreaded, he was sending to the Persian king a message which should stand him in good stead when he should come as an exile to the court of Sousa; that he deceived his enemy to the utter ruin of his fleet in order to win his favour against the time of trouble which he knew to be coming; that he looked indulgently on the guilt of the Spartan Pausanias, the colleague of Aristeides at Plataia (p. 122), although he despised the weakness of his intellect; and that on the death of the Spartan regent he took up, and carried on, the pitiable and silly work of treachery which in his hands had come to nothing. As if this were not enough, we are asked further to believe that in the Persian palace he actually found the refuge which he had pictured to himself: that his claim to favour was admitted

without question; that he promised to inslave his country and for twelve or fourteen years received the revenues of large towns to enable him to redeem his word; and that he died without making a single effort to fulfil any part of the promise which he had made to the Persian king.

With whatever portion of the story we may choose to deal, we shall find that it comes to pieces in the handling.

Story of the assignment of city revenues for his maintenance

We may take first this tale of the assignment of the revenues of Lampsakos, Myous, and Magnesia for his sustenance. The tale refutes itself by implying, or rather asserting, that nearly twenty or perhaps more than twenty years after the establishment of the Delian confederacy (p. 125) two cities lying almost under the shadow of Mount Mykalê, and a third on the shores of the Hellespont, could be made by a Persian king to yield up their wealth to his favourites. If he could thus treat these towns, he might put any others along the Egean coasts to the same use; and thus the work of the Greeks in destroying the Persian fleets and armies is reduced to nothing. If the resources of these cities were at the disposal of Artaxerxes, there was no reason why his tribute-gatherers should not be seen in every Ionian city, and therefore no reason why his armies should not take ample vengeance for the revolt which followed the catastrophe at Mykalê.

Bearing of this story on the assessment of Aristeides

It follows that, if this tale is to be believed, the account given of the assessment of Aristeides must be altogether rejected. The items of this assessment, the sum total of which amounted to 460 talents, are not given. But the assessment seems to have been based on the amount of tribute paid to the Persian king by the cities on the eastern shores of the Egean; and as the tribute for the Nomos, or district, which according to the arrangement of Dareios included the Ionians, Magnesians, Eolians, and some others on the continent, amounted to 400 talents in silver, the remaining sixty talents would represent the contributions of the islanders. Yet here we have the inhabitants of certain towns, assessed as members of the

Delian confederation, still at the beck and call of the Persian despot. It is true that the obstacles to be surmounted by the confederated Greeks, even when the Persian fleet had been destroyed at Mykalê, were formidable enough. It was then found to be a hard, and sometimes an impracticable task to dislodge the Persian garrisons from the cities which they occupied; and the Thrakian Doriskos, where Xerxes had reviewed his mighty force after passing into Europe, was still in the hands of a Persian governor when Herodotos was composing the later books of his history. Doriskos, however, was on Trakian soil: but the story which represents Artaxerxes as giving three Hellenic cities to Themistokles is absurd, because it attributes to him the absolute lordship over a vast territory, in which his authority was a thing of the past. Probably by that time he retained not a single port in that long and beautiful strip of land which had formed the brightest jewel in the crown of the Lydian kings.

If we wish for further reasons for rejecting the tale, we may find them in the fact that long ago, when Pausanias was spinning his poor web of treason, Spartan authority was able to reach him at Kolônai in the Troad, and that he found himself compelled to obey the messenger who bade him follow on pain, in case of refusal, of being declared the enemy of the people, whereas now, during years spent in luxurious ease at Magnesia, Themistokles could bid defiance to his opponents or persecutors at Athens, whose order for his arrest had nevertheless driven him away from Argos.

Case of Pausanias

So far as the Spartans are concerned, the case against Themistokles resolves itself into a charge of complicity with Pausanias. If this charge is refuted, nothing else remains. But although the accusation is made with sufficient boldness and circumstantiality, it has little substance or none. The Spartans spoke of proofs of his complicity; but Thucydides does not say that these proofs were exhibited to the Athenians, or that they could be exhibited. Nothing but the clearest evidence could establish such a charge, and no evidence whatever is forth-

Alleged complicity of Themistokles with Pausanias

coming. The circumstances of the two men are also as different as they could well be. If we know anything at all about Themistokles, we know that he prized the magnificent polity which grew with the growth of Athenian freedom; and it is impossible that he could forget his old devotion with the ease of a man whose country was for him nothing more than a school of rigid and perhaps hateful military bondage. Intrusted with the kingly power from the accident that his nephew the king was a minor, Pausanias had to look forward to a descent from his high authority at no very distant day; and the iron discipline of Spartan club life had manifestly long been to him intolerably irksome. Apart from this, he was simply a man who had to carry out the traditional system of his country and who fought at Plataia with perhaps the bravery of his ancestors and certainly with no sounder judgement (p. 122). His work, therefore, was ended with his victory in the field. The mind of Themistokles after the victory of Salamis was turned to the momentous task of building up the Athenian confederacy and laying the foundations of Athenian empire; and this work, we must especially note, needed the fullest concentration of mind and will.

Anecdotes illustrating his supposed treasons

Of the large number of personal anecdotes connected with and designed to illustrate the treasons of his later years, few call for serious consideration. The story of Plutarch that Themistokles intended to burn the allied fleet at Pagasai is absurdly opposed to the whole line of policy which he is known to have been carrying out at the time. The Greek fleet could not have wintered at Pagasai, when Pagasai was Thessalian and hostile to the allies; and the Athenians would only have weakened themselves by destroying the ships of all the other cities, while it was yet uncertain whether they might not be again attacked by the Phenician fleet of Xerxes. Some of the tales impute to Themistokles a folly of which probably only his Eupatrid slanderers could be guilty. He must have fallen into a second childhood before he could have even thought of comparing himself to a plane-tree which the men who had

sought its shelter during the storm were now cutting down. To the same class of stories belongs the anecdote which speaks of Themistokles as telling his children in the days of his exile how greatly they would have been losers if he had not been ruined. The tale points to ruin financially, and in this sense Themistokles was never ruined. In any other sense it is absurd, nay, it is impossible, to suppose that the memory of his ancient greatness could suggest to him nothing better than a pitiable satisfaction with his present state of degradation.

There remain the questions of his personal corruption and of his negotiations with the Persian kings. As to the former, we can lay hands on nothing more definite than his alleged compact with the Euboians (p. 145). But if we accept the fact of this agreement, to what does it amount? It is only by a figure of speech, and this a very strained one, that a man can be said to be bribed or persuaded into doing that which he has already made up his mind irrevocably to do. To assert that Themistokles was tempted by this bribe to do that which he had been wishing and striving with all his might to accomplish without the money seems something like a contradiction in terms. We are only told how he employed eight out of the thirty talents received from the Euboians; and so far as these are concerned, the corruption lay with Eurybiades and Adeimantos, not with himself. All governments have a certain expenditure on what is called secret service, the items of which are never published; and Themistokles ought not to be judged more harshly than modern statesmen. It is true that no other instances are mentioned of his employing the argument of bribery during the war; but we have several occasions in which the emergency was vastly more pressing, when he did not employ it. His failure to offer a bribe to men who had already taken one is inexplicable except on the ground that he had not the means for doing so, and that the sum which he received from the Euboians has been enormously exaggerated. On the alleged bribing of the whole board of Spartan Ephors (p. 175) it is unnecessary to waste words.

Employment of secret service money

His negotiations with Xerxes and his successor were carried on, it is said, partly by messages sent through Sikinnos, partly by letters, and partly in personal interviews. The first message is in all probability historical. It seems at first sight a masterly device for bringing about the destruction of the Persian fleet; and a feeling of suspicion is roused only when we seem to see that it is practically superfluous (pp. 42, 90, 92, 100, 122, 161, 168). Still the message may have hastened by a few hours the movement for which Themistokles was anxious; and those few hours, by giving the confederates time to fall back from the Salaminian gulf on the Corinthian isthmus, would have disconcerted all his plans and quenched all his hopes. The chance that his message might render this retreat impossible was a very sufficient reason for sending it (p. 160). For the second message the most circumstantial account asserts that Themistokles thought by means of it to secure the gratitude of the Persian king and a refuge, if troubles should befall him, in his palace at Sousa. As to the real feelings which under the circumstances this second message must have stirred up in the mind of Xerxes, we can be under no doubt (p. 167). They would be feelings of overpowering indignation at his treachery and his assurance. But the ascription of such a motive to Themistokles at such a time is the most astonishing thing in the whole narrative.

Relations of Themistokles with the Persian king

No man can at one and the same moment be actuated by two entirely distinct and conflicting motives; and this is only saying that he cannot at the same time serve God and Mammon. But this story represents Themistokles as intent with the most passionate devotion on setting his country free, and yet as also not less earnestly bent on securing a place of refuge among the very enemies whom he was driving out. Some notion of such a condition of mind may perhaps be formed if we should suppose that when before the battle of Trafalgar Nelson warned every man that England looked to him to do his duty, he had already done his best to secure the good will of Napoleon Bonaparte, whose

Alleged motives of Themistokles

fleets he was advancing to encounter. If we refuse to admit the possibility of such double action in the case of Nelson, we have precisely the same justification for refusing to admit it in the case of Themistokles. We must not, however, forget that if in the version of Herodotos Themistokles holds out to the Persian sovereign the prospect of an unmolested march, there were other and it would seem more popular versions which spoke of him as terrifying the king by warnings that he might be intercepted on the road. We may, if we please, say that the sending of the second message may be accounted for by the mere love of exercising an art in which a man excels, in other words that the satisfaction of conducting an intrigue is a sufficient motive for entering upon it. Such a supposition is scarcely consistent with the judgement of the character of Themistokles given by Thucydides, although it may harmonise well with the spirit of those anecdotes which we have dismissed as really beneath our notice.

Letters of Themistokles to the Persian king

We come now to the written communications of Themistokles with the Persian kings. The Spartans chose to regard him as an accomplice in the schemes of Pausanias; but they failed altogether to produce any evidence that he took any active part in those schemes or that he knew anything about them, nor are we told that any documents were discovered after the death of Pausanias which established the guilt of Themistokles. We can, therefore, deal only with the letter which Themistokles on reaching Asia is said to have sent to Artaxerxes. This letter (p. 180) is couched in terms of intolerable insolence and unblushing falsehood. The plea that the instinct of self-preservation alone had led him to resist and repel the invasion of Xerxes must to his son, who knew something about the Medism (p. 136) of Boiotians (p. 141), Thessalians (p. 143), and Argives, have appeared not less ridiculous than false: the assertion that, as soon as he could safely do so, he had compensated his injuries with greater benefits must have seemed a monstrous and impudent lie.

But we have further to ask whence Thucydides obtained

the letter of which he professes to give us the words. If Themistokles wrote such a letter, the original must have gone to Artaxerxes. In this case we must suppose one of three things. Either Themistokles kept a copy of it, or Artaxerxes sent back the original, or allowed a transcript to be made. The last degree of unlikelihood attaches to all these suppositions. The original could be recovered only from the archives of Sousa, and apart from the unlikelihood that such documents would be preserved there at all there is the far greater unlikelihood that they would ever be given up to the king's enemies. If these alternatives fail us, one conclusion only is possible, namely, that the letter, as we have it, is a forgery.

Genuineness of the writings

But whether this or any other letter was sent or not, the stories of the journey of Themistokles to Sousa and of his sojourn there are pure fictions; and hence we can form no judgement of the motives which led Artaxerxes to befriend Themistokles or to bestow on him his lavish bounty, if lavish it was. We are confronted by the fact that during the long series of years which he is said to have spent at Magnesia he made not the least effort to fulfil his promise to the Persian king that he would bring all Greece under his sway; and this fact must be taken as proving conclusively that no direct enterprise against the freedom of the Hellenic world could have been involved in his engagement.

Alleged compact with Artaxerxes

The supposition that he had so pledged himself gave rise to the story that his death was caused by taking poison in order to avoid the obligation. But to this story Thucydides gives no credence. The version of the tale, preserved by Diodoros, is even more absurd. According to this tradition his death was a masterly stratagem to preclude all further attacks from Persia against the freedom of his country. Xerxes, living still, it would seem, some fifteen years after the date assigned for his murder, proposed to try his luck in another invasion of Greece and to appoint Themistokles general-in-chief of his armament.

Anecdotes of the death of Themistokles

Taking him at his word, the Athenian exile made the king swear solemnly that he would do nothing without him. This promise was ratified over a sacrifice, and Themistokles drinking some of the victim's blood fell dead on the spot, leaving Xerxes bound to abandon all thought of retrieving the disasters of Salamis, Plataia, and Mykalê.

That Themistokles entered into no such contract as that which is ascribed to him in the sketch of his life by Thucydides is manifest; but we should be rash if we committed ourselves to the conclusion that he entered into no contract at all. From the time of his leaving Pydna he passes into a region where historical truth has but a sickly and feeble growth. In the details of the stories which have gathered round him we have found nothing clear, nothing consistent. But assuredly he had it in his power to do good service for the Persians; and without plotting the destruction of Athens or the enslavement of Western Hellas he might yet have done much to check the growth of the Athenian empire. The rapid extension of this empire threatened to deprive the Persian king of some of his fairest provinces; and the latter might well promise a splendid reward to Themistokles, if he could guarantee him against further losses. Some such promise he may have made; and if he made it, it would be a disgraceful and dishonourable sequel to a career of astonishing splendour.

Possible nature of his contract with Artaxerxes

But the whole of this portion of his life is wrapped in mist. At first sight it seems strange that he should give much heed to the machinations of his enemies at Athens, while he was living quietly as an ostracised man at Argos, or that he should have shrunk from returning home to undergo a second formal trial. But the fact of his ostracism showed that he had at least six thousand opponents at Athens; and he must have known better than we can know the measure and strength of their ill will and the chances of their succeeding in bringing about a miscarriage of justice. He may also have felt strongly that the verdict of acquittal obtained on his first trial should

Influences acting on Themistokles after his ostracism

have served as a bar to a second criminal prosecution, although it might be no bar to his exile by sentence of ostracism. He would thus be justified in urging that a second accusation was a virtual condemnation before his cause could be heard. If his enemies were unscrupulous, he might well regard the result with apprehension, and may have judged wisely in declining to appear before them. It is a question on which we have no means of reaching a decisive or satisfactory conclusion, and must content ourselves with regretting that he found it more prudent to avoid his enemies than to face them.

Disposition of the enemies of Themistokles

We know enough, however, of the conditions of the age to be convinced that the position of a man who brought on himself the full force of Eupatrid jealousy must have been a perilous one, even though he might have the main body of the citizens strongly on his side. We know how this feeling worked in the earlier days of the Roman republic (p. 177), and to what an extent the making of history was in the hands of the fierce Patrician faction. All that we can say is that the disposition of the Eupatrids at Athens was less bloodthirsty, although even here its darker side came out not many years later in the murder of Ephialtes. These facts help to clear away many perplexities in the later history of Themistokles, and justify us in speaking with tolerable definiteness about his career not merely in its earlier stages, but as a whole.

Origin of the traditional stories about Themistokles

We are probably very near the mark if we conclude that from first to last he well deserved the warm affection which his countrymen generally felt for him during his life and with which they cherished his memory after his death; that his ostracism was due wholly to the exertions of the oligarchic party, stimulated by the arguments or the bribes of the Spartans; that the order for his arrest which made him fly from Argos (p. 180) was in like manner the result of Spartan intrigues, acting on the virulent animosity felt towards him by his personal enemies; that during the years of his exile these

enemies strung together a vast multitude of slanders which would be readily taken up and propagated by the oligarchic factions in every city; that in the making of history these factions had thus far a power altogether beyond that of the main body of the citizens; and that thus in the course of thirty or forty years these reports were worked into the shape of the traditional narrative preserved to us by Thucydides.

General results of the inquiry

Of the details of this narrative we have seen that in almost every instance we have versions which contradict and exclude each other. Nor is there any evidence forthcoming to lessen our legitimate satisfaction in the result of an inquiry which acquits of treason one of the greatest of Athenian statesmen and makes his whole career intelligible. If his acts were sometimes blameworthy, we have to remember that he was treated with gross injustice. We can readily suppose that in his time of exile in Asia he looked back on the past with some anger and resentment; but these feelings would have for their object only that party or faction whose enmity it was impossible to appease, not the main body of the people, by whom he knew himself to be beloved.

Date of the death of Themistokles

Themistokles is said to have lived two and twenty years from the date of his ostracism. If it be so, he died in the year 449 B.C. The Magnesians pointed with pride to a magnificent sepulchre in their Agora or market-place, as containing his bones (p. 181); but a counter-tradition assigned them a resting-place within the harbour of Peiraieus. His sons, we are told, dedicated in the Parthenon a historical picture which exhibited to his countrymen the features and form of the great statesman and leader to whom Athens owed her continued existence and her splendid empire.

PAUSANIAS

THE number of Spartan statesmen is not great, and if the career of Pausanias had ended on the field of Plataia, there would scarcely have been sufficient reason for regarding him as a statesman at all. But the mission with which he was charged after that great battle shows that his countrymen looked on him as a man fitted to uphold the supremacy of Sparta, and he may be taken as to a certain degree an exponent of Spartan policy, more especially as an attempt was made to carry out this policy systematically in the latter portion of the Peloponnesian war some two generations later.

Spartan statesmanship

Pausanias is sometimes spoken of as if he had been a Spartan king. He was never king, although for many years he exercised a power such as Spartan kings seldom attained. His father Kleombrotos was a brother of Leonidas, who fell at Thermopylai, and became regent in the name of the young son of Leonidas. Kleombrotos lived only a few months longer, and on his death Pausanias succeeded to the regency, 479 B.C.

Death of Kleombrotos

His accession to power came at a crisis of supreme importance for Greece and for Europe. The Persian fleet, ruinously defeated at Salamis, had made its way as best it could across the Egean, and Xerxes with his cumbrous body-guard was marching hurriedly to the Hellespont; but Mardonios with the Persian warriors whose fathers had followed Cyrus from victory to victory remained behind with the fixed purpose that he would achieve the conquest of Greece or die. From Boiotia

Occupation of Athens by Mardonios, 479 B.C.

Mardonios had found his way again to Athens, and the city whose tyrants had had the chief share in precipitating the storm of Persian invasion on Europe was once more in his grasp. But his policy differed altogether from that of his master. Xerxes had been 'intent only on punishing and humiliating the Athenians: Mardonios was not less steadily bent on winning them over, if it should be possible to do so. He thought that when they saw their soil again trodden by invading armies, while the care of the general protected the city from harm, they would probably accept the very lenient terms which he wished to offer to them.

But the Athenians were not so easily caught. His passage across the Boiotian border was followed immediately by a second migration (p. 153) of the Athenian people; and ten months after he had entered it with Xerxes, Mardonios stood once more in a silent and desolate city. The Athenians, again banished from their homes, told the Spartans plainly that, unless they should receive immediate help, they must devise some means of escape from their present troubles. These words clearly indicated submission to Persia, if no other way should be found to lie open before them; and the Spartans, it is said, awoke to a sense of their danger when a citizen of Tegea warned them that the Isthmian wall would be of very little use, if through any compact made with Mardonios the Athenian fleet should cooperate with the Persian land army.

Second abandonment of the city

The Spartans were not prepared, as yet, to look with favour on the future policy of Pausanias, and they took the warning so seriously to heart that on that very night they dispatched 5,000 heavy-armed soldiers or hoplites under Pausanias, each hoplite being attended by seven helots,—in all, a force of 40,000 men. Early the next day the envoys of the extra-Peloponnesian cities informed the Ephors, that, whatever pleas for delay the Spartans might urge on the score of the religious obligations of festivals, the Athenians would now make such

Sudden and secret dispatch of an army from Sparta

terms as might be practicable with the Persians. The only answer which they received was couched in the enigmatic words, 'They are gone, and are already in the Oresteion on their way to meet the strangers.' 'Who are gone?' they asked, 'and who are the strangers?' 'Our Spartans have gone with the helots,' they answered, 'and the strangers are the Persians.' The envoys hereupon hastened away in amazement; but the mystery is easily explained.

Reasons for this secresy

The Argives, it seems, were under a promise to Mardonios to prevent by force, if force should be needed, the passage of any Spartan army from the Peloponnesos. The Persian leader felt that his pledge to Xerxes would be practically redeemed, if Athens should submit or if he could make an independent alliance with the Athenians, and that this result would be best brought about if their country were not devastated and their houses were not burnt. But if this was to be avoided, Attica must not be made a battle-field; and therefore no Peloponnesian army must be allowed to enter it. The promise given by the Argives seemed to insure him against such a misfortune. This agreement must have come to the knowledge of the Ephors, and there is nothing to surprise us in this fact. But it imposed on them, as we may readily understand, the need of absolute secresy on their part in any military plans which they might wish to carry out.

Retreat of Mardonios into Boiotia

When owing to this secresy their scheme succeeded and the Argives sent word to Athens to say that they had failed to prevent the departure of the Spartans, Mardonios felt that his own designs were finally frustrated. He abandoned Attica to his soldiers. The city was set on fire; and any buildings or walls which had withstood the ravages of the first invasion were thrown down. Attica, however, was ill-suited for cavalry, and in case of defeat he would have to lead his army through narrow and perilous passes. He therefore issued orders for retreat, and the Persian host soon stood on the plain of Thebes.

At the Corinthian isthmus Pausanias was joined by the Peloponnesian allies, and at Eleusis by the Athenians. By virtue of the acknowledged supremacy of Sparta in the Hellenic world, he assumed the chief command over the whole; and the army marched on until from the slopes of Kithairon (Cithæron) they looked down on the Persian camp near the northern bank of the Asopos. In this camp the sight of the Greeks, as their ranks deployed on the mountain side, excited little apprehension or fear. The Greeks numbered, it is said, 110,000 men, while Mardonios had 300,000 picked soldiers: but this is simply an expression of overwhelming strength like the six millions of Xerxes. The decisive conflict was, however, long delayed, owing, it is said, to the soothsayers, who on both sides interpreted the omens as unfavourable to the aggressor.

March of the Greek army to Plataia

Eleven days had passed away, when Artabazos, who with a guard of (we are told) six myriads had escorted Xerxes to the Hellespont, advised Mardonios to fall back upon Thebes and trust less to men than to money. In open battle the Persians could not hope for victory: but every Greek might be bought. The advice is manifestly the fiction of a later age. The men assembled in arms on the sides of Kithairon were proof of the fact that some Greeks at least were not to be won over by bribes. But Artabazos manifestly doubted the military skill of Mardonios, and the sequel showed that he disapproved of his arrangements for the battle in which he died.

Conflicting counsels of Mardonios and Artabazos

The patience of Mardonios was exhausted; and sending for his officers he asked them if they knew of any oracle which foretold the destruction of the Persians on Hellenic ground. All were silent, and Mardonios went on. 'Since you either do not know or are afraid to say out what you know, I will tell you myself. There is an oracle which says that Persians coming to Hellas shall plunder the temple at Delphoi and then be utterly destroyed. But we are not going against this temple, nor shall we attempt to plunder it: so that this cannot be

Address of Mardonios to his officers

our ruin. All therefore who have any good will to the Persians may be glad, for, so far as the oracles are concerned, we shall be the conquerors. We shall fight to-morrow.' Thus the die was cast; but if we give any credit to the tale, the words of Mardonios must either bring the Delphian expedition (pp. 154, 155) altogether into doubt, or prove that he was uttering a conscious lie on a matter which must have been quite as well known to his officers as to himself.

Alleged request of Pausanias for a change in the position of the Spartan troops

During the night which followed this decision, the Makedonian chief Alexandros rode to the outposts of the Athenians and had with their leaders the interview the report of which led Pausanias, as it is said, to propose that change in the position of the Spartans and Athenians, which we have been compelled to reject as a groundless and deliberate fiction (p. 122). The qualities of Pausanias as a military commander were seemingly not preeminent; but there is no need to ascribe to him a most unsoldierlike timidity for a reason which is manifestly a glaring falsehood.

Opposition of Amompharetos to Pausanias

On the morning of the eleventh day the battle of Plataia may be said practically to have begun. During the whole of the previous day the Greeks had been sorely pressed by constant charges of the Persian cavalry; and lack of water made it indispensably necessary to shift their ground. In carrying out this measure Pausanias was met on the part of an officer named Amompharetos with a resistance which throws a strange light on the state of Spartan discipline at the time. This officer complained that, without having been summoned to the previous council, he was now commanded to retreat not merely against his own judgement, but in violation of the duty which forbade retreat to all Spartans under all circumstances. It is strange that Amompharetos should not have heard of the conduct of Eurybiades at Artemision, and of the pertinacity with which he insisted on retreating from Salamis. If he objected now to a change which was to be made by the whole army, with what indignation must he not

have resisted the order which commanded Spartans to place themselves in front of the slaves of the Persians (p. 122)? Yet in that story Amompharetos offers no resistance to arrangements in the carrying out of which he would himself have to take part. "If such had been the fact, he might now have been silenced by the rejoinder that there was no great glory in refusing to do what he had already agreed to do without a word of objection a few hours before. Suspecting that the delay of the Spartans arose from treachery, the Athenians sent to ascertain the real state of things. Their herald found the Spartan leaders disputing hotly with Amompharetos, who, taking up a large stone with both hands, placed it at the feet of Pausanias, saying that thus he gave his vote against the proposal to turn their backs upon the enemy. Calling him a madman, Pausanias turned to the herald, and bade him go and report how things were and urge at the same time the immediate union of the Athenian with the Spartan forces. So passed the night. The day was dawning when Pausanias gave the decisive order; and Amompharetos, left alone, thought it prudent to join the main body.

This movement in retreat was misinterpreted by Mardonios, who upbraided Artabazos with the fear of the Spartans betrayed by his recent advice, and warned him that the king should assuredly hear of it. This threat probably determined the action of Artabazos later on in the day. But for the moment the Persians were in exultation, and rushed to the attack in disorder. Even in this tumultuous onset they were formidable, and Pausanias, finding himself much distressed by the Persian cavalry, again besought help from the Athenians. He added, we are told, a vehement condemnation of the Peloponnesian allies, who, he said, had run away. But as they were barely a mile distant, they might have been summoned as easily as the Athenians. Thus far Pausanias, whatever may have been the bravery for which he received the prize after the battle, had displayed no great military skill.

Battle of Plataia. Disorderly attack of the Persians

But in truth the whole Greek army was hardly pressed; and the soothsayers still hampered them by forbidding any action except in the way of self-defence. This merely passive resistance enabled the Persians to make a rampart of their wicker-work shields, behind which they shot their arrows with fatal effect. At last Pausanias, looking in agony to the temple of Hērē, besought the queen of heaven not to abandon them utterly. At the very moment when he offered the prayer, the sacrifices were reported favourable; and the Spartans with a fierce charge bore down the hedge of shields.

Distress of the Greek army

The Persians fought with heroic bravery; but they wore no body-armour, and they had little discipline or none. The death of Mardonios virtually decided the issue of the fight. The Persians in their linen tunics were beaten down by the brazen-coated hoplites, and making their way to their fortified camp took refuge behind its wooden bulwarks. Seeing how the day was going, Artabazos led his chosen guards from the field, and hurried away with all speed into Thessaly, where the chiefs, entertaining him at a splendid banquet, prayed for news of the army of Mardonios. Artabazos dextrously parried the question by telling them that he had been dispatched on an urgent errand to Thrace, and begged them to welcome Mardonios, when he should follow him, with their usual hospitality.

Defeat of the Persians

The victory of the Greeks was fearfully complete; and the bravery of Pausanias is said to have largely contributed to it. The pictures drawn of him at this time are in marked contrast with the dark and uninviting scenes of his later career. In these he is described as a selfish and sensual despot, with whom wealth and luxury are of paramount importance in life; but at Plataia he is the severe and high-minded Spartan who feels that the majesty of law has a power beyond that of irresponsible tyrants. Among the women found in the Persian camp was the daughter of Hegetoridas of Kos, who besought deliverance from the shameful state into which the fortune of war

Anecdotes of Pausanias after the battle

had brought her. In answer to her prayer Pausanias assured her that as a suppliant she would in any case be entitled to his protection, but that she had on him a further claim as being the child of one of his most intimate friends. Another anecdote gives his answer to Lampon, who had urged him to impale the body of Mardonios in requital of the indignities to which Mardonios with Xerxes had subjected the body of Leonidas. The advice, he said, deserved to be punished as counsel better befitting savages than Greeks. Leonidas and those who died with him at Thermopylai needed no such wretched vindication: they were amply avenged already in the hecatombs of Persian warriors who lay dead around them. The third anecdote relates to the dividing of the spoils, which are described as astonishingly vast and varied. The horse of Mardonios was fed, it seems, at a brazen manger, and this manger was now dedicated to Athênê. But with this exception everything was brought into a common stock. Of this stock a certain proportion was set apart for the gods, and supplied the materials for the golden tripod at Delphoi, and for colossal bronze statues of Zeus at Olympia and the Corinthian isthmus. Of the remainder the tenth part reserved for Pausanias left him the possessor of enormous wealth and explains in some measure his subsequent career. For the moment the lessons taught by the frugal discipline of Sparta retained their power over him: and ordering a banquet to be prepared after Persian fashion, with the splendid furniture of Xerxes on the one side and placed alongside of a simple Lakonian meal on another table, he is said to have pointed out to the Greek generals the folly of the despot who, faring thus sumptuously, had come to rob the Greeks of their sorry food.

Xerxes, however, had come, and Pausanias could not but know that he had come, on no such errand of robbery. Nor could he be ignorant that the proposals made by Mardonios to the Athenians would have been regarded as honourable and advantageous by any people to whom political independence was not of paramount

Change in the character of Pausanias

value. His errand was one not of plunder but simply of subjugation; and Pausanias himself was soon to look upon his policy in another light and to make it his own. The barb was already in his side, and the poison was beginning to course through his veins. He was already, as regent for one of the Spartan kings, commander in chief of all the Greek forces, and everything that now happened tended to increase his importance in his own eyes and to tempt him on to schemes of greater ambition.

Spartan compact with the Athenians

With the Athenians and the other allies he renewed the convention which pledged them, we are told, never to make terms with the barbarian, to punish the Medizing (p. 136) states by confiscating a tenth of all their property, and to leave in ruins all the temples which the Persians had demolished, as a perpetual remembrance of the great struggle. A further provision binding them to maintain a definite force for carrying on the war, shows that they were very far from thinking that even for purposes of aggression the power of Persia was already broken.

Measures taken by the allies for the punishment of Thebes

Eleven days after the battle Pausanias appeared before the walls of Thebes to demand the surrender of those citizens who had been most prominent in bringing about the Medism of the country, especially of two named Timagenidas and Attaginos. The refusal of the Thebans was followed by a general devastation of the land, which led Timagenidas to propose that the Thebans should find out whether Pausanias wanted money. Should it be so, he urged that it should be paid to him out of the public treasury, inasmuch as their Medism was the common and voluntary act of all the citizens, a statement which was in all likelihood strictly true, and which perhaps throws light on the character of the Boiotian population (p. 141). But Pausanias wanted not the money but the men. Attaginos made his escape; but Pausanias refused to punish in their father's stead his children, who were handed over to him. The others surrendered themselves, relying, it is said,

on securing their safety by their wealth: but Pausanias took them hastily to the isthmus and there put them all to death.

A year later Pausanias, as admiral of the confederate fleet, sailed to Cyprus, and thence, having recovered the greater part of the island, to Byzantion, where the resistance seems to have been as obstinate as at Sestos. The place was, however, at length reduced, and Pausanias stood at the head of a triumphant confederacy which owned the headship of Sparta. Sparta had now the opportunity of welding the broken elements of Hellenic society into something like an organized national life. But she had never deliberately sought her present position, which had rather been thrust upon her (p. 125), and in her generals and statesmen she found unfortunately her greatest enemies. Power and wealth (and chiefly it would seem power) had already turned the head of Pausanias. He had had his own name, as supreme leader (Archêgos) of the Hellenes, inscribed on the tripod which commemorated the victory at Plataia; and the indignant Spartans erased his name, substituting for it the names of the cities which had taken part in the battle.

Reduction of Byzantion by Pausanias, 477 B.C.

But the fall of Byzantion seems to have inspired him seriously with the thought that, as a tributary of the Persian king, he might make himself permanent sovereign of the whole Greek world. He may have intended that his tributary character should be merely nominal, or he may have left this question to be decided by the course of events. But he entered on the path of intrigue and of treason by sending to Xerxes the prisoners taken in the city, spreading at the same time the report that they had escaped.

Effects of success on Pausanias

The story of his treasons is of importance chiefly in its alleged bearing on the later life of Themistokles (p. 179); and therefore each incident must be carefully noted. Soon after the dismissal or escape of the prisoners he sent, by the hands of an Eretrian named Gongylos, a letter to Xerxes, the

wording of which, Thucydides tells us, was subsequently proved to be as follows:—

Letter of Pausanias to Xerxes

'Pausanias, the supreme commander of Sparta, wishing to gratify thee sends thee the men whom he has taken prisoners in war. My purpose, if it seem good to thee, is to marry thy daughter, and to bring Sparta and the rest of Hellas under thy sway; and I think that with thy counsel I am able to do this. If then this pleases thee, send to the coast a trustworthy man through whom we may hold communication with each other.'

Mission of Artabazos to Pausanias

The man chosen was Artabazos, who had escorted Xerxes to the Hellespont, and who had left the field of Plataia as soon as the issue of the day was decided against the Persians (p. 201). The answer sent through Artabazos assured Pausanias that his name was enrolled in the list of the benefactors of the king for his good deed in freeing the Byzantion prisoners, and besought him to spare neither time, men, nor money for the immediate accomplishment of his schemes.

Genuineness of the correspondence between Pausanias and Xerxes

It must be noted that, so far as appears from the narrative, no harm happened to Gongylos for taking the letter of Pausanias to the king. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the letter, however it may have been worded, was answered, although we may well suppose that the spirit of Cyrus or Dareios would have been roused to rage at the presumption of the petty chief who aspired to an alliance with the royal house of Persia on the score not of anything that he had done (for thus far he had only dealt some terrible blows on Persian power), but of what he hoped to be able to do by and by. Any doubts which we may feel will have reference not to the receipt of an answer by Pausanias, but to its preservation, especially when circumstances had arisen which made the keeping of such a document a highly imprudent and dangerous measure. Conspirators are generally careful to get rid of compromising papers, especially when these papers are quite unnecessary; and a Spartan conspirator would least of all be tempted to keep them.

But if it be not likely that he would keep letters from the king which, if discovered, would bring about his condemnation, it is immeasurably less likely that he would keep copies of his own letters to the Persian sovereign: and in no other way could they possibly become known to Thucydides or to any other European. One letter written by Pausanias is said to have been brought to the Spartan Ephors. It was the letter intrusted to an Argilian slave. But in that letter there was the strict charge that the bearer should be put to death; and according to his account not one of the previous messengers of Pausanias had ever returned from Sousa,—in other words, they had all been put to death. How then could the contents of the letters which they carried ever be made known? It is hard to believe that they would be returned to anyone from the archives of Sousa, and still more hard to convince ourselves that they would be placed in the hands of the king's enemies. The conclusion to which we are driven is that the letters from Pausanias to Xerxes, as we have them, are forged; and if these are forged, then beyond a doubt the letters of Themistokles to the Persian despot are forged also.

Difficulties connected with the letters of Pausanias and Themistokles

But, as we have seen, there is no reason for supposing that Gongylos the Eretrian had been put to death; and certainly it is possible that the letters enjoining the death of the messengers may have been written after his return. But Thucydides draws no distinction between one set of letters and another, and the assertion of the Argilian that no previous messengers had returned is unqualified. He speaks, indeed, of subsequent discoveries as showing the contents of the letter sent by Gongylos; but he does not say that he had himself seen the letter, and we cannot extract from his words any assurance of its genuineness. There remains one further consideration which in dealing with a Spartan's career cannot be lightly passed by. The Spartan education was miserably defective; and writing was a rare accomplishment. There is no reason to suppose that Pau-

Spartan powers of writing

sanias possessed it; and it is strange that his scribe should exhibit a power of writing altogether beyond that of the secretary of Mindaros, who, seventy years afterwards, announced in exactly eleven words the death of his master and the destruction of the Spartan fleet at Kyzikos. Who again was this trusty scribe who could be made acquainted not only with his treacherous schemes, but with the injunctions that the bearers of his letters should be put to death? and how is it that this scribe was not brought forward as a witness on the trial of his master?

We are thus left in complete uncertainty as to the terms of the letters from Pausanias to Xerxes. If we accept the answers of the Persian king as genuine, we can but say that his memory seems to have been by no means retentive. His gratitude was easily earned if the deliverance of some prisoners from Byzantion could wipe out the remembrance of the carnage and ruin of the field of Plataia. This, however, is a minor difficulty. We cannot doubt that Artabazos was sent down to take charge of the satrapy of Daskyleion (p. 77), and to carry on the negotiations with the Spartan leader.

Gratitude of Xerxes

The head of this unhappy man was now fairly turned. Clothing himself in Persian garb, he aped the privacy of Oriental despots, and when he came forth from his palace, it was to make a magnificent progress through Thrace, surrounded by Egyptian and Median body-guards. The rumours which went abroad about his strange behaviour led to his recall; but although he was put on his trial, nothing conclusively establishing his guilt could, according to Spartan procedure, be proved against him. He was formally acquitted, but at the same time deprived of his command. This degradation brought him down from a power rarely enjoyed by Spartan kings, and to Pausanias it was intolerable. He soon found his way again to Byzantion, where he seems to have taken up a fortified position from which he was dislodged by the Athenians. Crossing the strait, he carried on at Kolonai his negotiations with Artabazos.

Trial and acquittal of Pausanias

The Spartan leaders were, indeed, doing all that they could to transfer to Athens the supremacy of Sparta. The king Leotychides, who had commanded the confederates at the battle of Mykalê, which completed the work of Salamis, had been sent to put down the Aleuad chiefs of Thessaly (p. 142). He betrayed his trust for money, and being taken red-handed was banished and died in exile, and on his death was succeeded by his grandson Archidamos, whose name is associated with the Peloponnesian war. The history of Pausanias was much of the same kind. Even before his recall the Asiatic Greeks had intreated Aristeides to admit them into direct relations with Athens. It was becoming clear that Greece was now divided into two great sections, the one gravitating to Sparta as the great land power, the other to Athens as supreme by sea.

Condemnation of Leotychides

But Athens could not yet afford to run into open quarrel with Sparta, and thus we can scarcely believe the story of Plutarch that at the suggestion of Aristeides some Ionian vessels attacked the ship of Pausanias in the harbour of Byzantion and so made the idea of reconciliation impossible. This result had been virtually brought about by the conduct of Pausanias: and when some Spartan commissioners headed by Dorkis came to take his place, they were met by a passive resistance, and retiring from a field in which they were unable to compel obedience, they left the Athenian Confederacy an accomplished fact. The Spartans had no means of carrying on a war at such a distance from home, and they felt or affected to feel satisfaction in the thought that Athens would continue a work which to them had become irksome as well as costly.

Effects of the conduct of Pausanias on the relations of Sparta with Athens

The position of the Athenians was for the time one of great difficulty. A strange poison seemed to be working in a large part of the world which claimed the Hellenic name. The disposition of the Theban and Thessalian chiefs was scarcely more satisfactory than it had been before and during the invasion of Xerxes; and

Recall of Pausanias to Sparta

Leotychides had shown himself almost as corrupt as Pausanias, who was again busy with his treasons under the conviction that everything might be made to yield to Persian gold. To promote this work of corruption Pausanias seems to have brought about the mission of Arthmios of Zeleia to the Greek cities generally; and the constant complaints urged against him so wearied the Spartans that they charged him, on pain of being declared the enemy of the people in case of refusal, to follow the messenger sent to summon him home.

Relying on his wealth, he returned: and the Ephors threw him into prison. But even now nothing could be definitely proved against him: and being set free he challenged his accusers once and for all to establish their charges or to withdraw them. Their efforts could do nothing more than raise a presumption against him, for Spartan law could be satisfied with nothing less than the actual verbal confession of the prisoner. Helots came forward to say that he had promised them not only freedom but citizenship, if they would give their help in making him a despot: but he had not been heard to tempt them, and their assertions went for nothing. Then followed the testimony of the Argilian slave (p. 206), who, noticing that no previous messengers from Pausanias to the Persian king had come back from Sousa, opened his letter and found in it the order for his own death. But strange to say, of this letter, which the Argilian is said to have handed to the Ephors, Thucydides has not left us a copy, nor has he given us even a summary of its contents, nor can we say that he ever saw it.

Charges brought against Pausanias

Even now the Ephors declared that they must have oral testimony to supplement this written evidence. The device which they hit upon to obtain it was to send the Argilian as a suppliant to the Temenos, or sacred ground, of Poseidon at cape Tainaron, and there in a hut which had double walls to listen themselves to the conversation between the slave and his master. Pausanias, it seems, soon came to ask what had led him to take a step so strange. The slave retorted by

Device of the Ephors to obtain the oral confession of Pausanias

asking what he had done to merit the doom of death for bearing his letter to Xerxes. Candidly confessing the wrong which he had designed to do to him, Pausanias now assured him with a solemn oath that no mischief should befall him if he would only make haste on his errand and not delay the progress of the negotiations.

With this evidence even Spartan Ephors must be satisfied. Some of them made up their minds to arrest him; but one Ephor, as Pausanias met them, contrived to make a sign warning him of danger and to point to the sanctuary of Athênê of the Brazen House (Chalkioichos). In the little cell of the temple Pausanias hurriedly took refuge; but he was wholly without means of sustenance; and the magistrates, taking off the roof and walling up the doors, left him to starve. A story was told that while the Ephors were yet doubting what they should do, his mother without uttering a word laid a brick which she had brought at the door of the building and then departed as silently as she came. When hunger had all but ended its work, they drew him out, and after his death they buried his body near the sanctuary, abandoning their first thought of hurling it into the Kaiadas or chasm for receiving the corpses of criminals.

Death of Pausanias, ? 470 B.C.

But by removing a suppliant the Ephors had put themselves technically in the wrong, and an order came from Delphoi telling them that the body of Pausanias must be buried on the spot where he died and that the deity of the Brazen House must be appeased with two bodies instead of one. In earlier ages this would have been followed by a double human sacrifice. The wrong was atoned for the present by the dedication of two brazen statues, although we shall see that in the time of Perikles it was made use of against the Spartans who had tried to invoke against him the curse of Kylon (pp. 13, 43, 70). The date of his death cannot be fixed with precise exactness. It cannot have taken place before the ostracism of Themistokles, B.C. 471, or later than 466 B.C., when Themistokles made his escape into Asia.

Burial of his body

Object and aims of Pausanias

The scheme of Pausanias, so far as we can form a judgement of it, seems to have been the establishment of a despotic power in Greece, this power to be in the first instance exercised by himself under the hegemony or the sway of the Persian king. He may have been as intent on upholding the supremacy of Sparta as his own; but his countrymen did not so interpret his conduct. There is however no material difference between the policy of Pausanias after the battle of Plataia, and the policy deliberately adopted and carried out by the Spartan state towards the close of its deadly struggle with Athens in the Peloponnesian war.

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GELON

THE picture of the Greek world in the age of Xerxes is not complete without a reference to the western settlements, some of which attained a magnificence never reached by the parent cities whether of Continental or Sporadic (p. 72) Hellas. Of these western colonies Syracuse rose to greatness under Gelon, who, contemporaneously with the invasion of Xerxes, had to fight against an enemy not less formidable, and who gained over that enemy a success as decisive as that which Sparta and Athens achieved at Salamis or Mykalê. Gelon, moreover, was invited to take part in the resistance offered to Xerxes; and the offer and refusal alike throw light on the relations between the eastern Greeks and the younger colonies of the west.

The western Greek world

In its vices as well as in its better qualities this newer world closely resembled the old. There was the same tribal jealousy and disunion, and there were the same feuds leading to frequent revolutions, the same transitions from oligarchical government to tyrannies (p. 36). In the size of their cities and the grandeur of their temples they were almost more than rivals of their eastern kinsfolk; but the marvellously rapid growth of these settlements was prodigiously aided by the advantages which they enjoyed in the soil, the climate, and the physical resources of the country.

Causes tending to promote the prosperity of the western Greek colonies

Among the despots who rose to power in these cities none perhaps was more prominent than Gelon, who made himself master first of Gela, and then of Syracuse. Sprung from an illustrious family, he became general of the cavalry in the service of the despot Hippo-

Rise of Gelon

krates. After the death of the latter he took up the cause of his young sons, whose authority the men of Gela refused to acknowledge: but having defeated them in battle, he put aside the youths, and armed with supreme power in his own person he resolved to obtain possession of Syracuse. The oligarchical landowners, who had been driven out by a combination of the poorer freemen with the predial serfs, eagerly availed themselves of Gelon's help towards regaining their property and their power. The former may have been restored to them: the latter Gelon had made up his mind to keep for himself.

He had no need to fight for the prize which he sought. On his approach the Syracusan demos threw open the city gates, and the great wish of his life was realised, ? 485 B.C. Gela, which with Syracuse marks the base of a triangle which has the southern promontory of Pachinos for its apex, he intrusted to his brother Hieron, and devoted himself with unscrupulous energy to the aggrandisement of his new home. Imitating Persian or Assyrian despots in wholesale deportations of people from one place to another, he transferred to Syracuse the citizens of Kamarina, together with half the population of Gela. His next step was to bring the Eupatrids of the Sicilian towns of Megara and Euboia and make them citizens of Syracuse. The provocation which called for his interference came wholly from these oligarchs, and they were gainers perhaps by the change rather than sufferers. The demos, which had given no cause of offence, he handed over to foreign slave-dealers. Herodotos, in telling the wretched story, adds emphatically that he did so because he looked on the rabble of the commons (p. 24) as very scurvy companions. The expression indicates the vehement jealousy of the noble houses, for whom citizenship was a privilege inhering in their blood and strictly confined to those in whose veins that blood was flowing.

Aggrandisement of Syracuse under Gelon

In the opinion which he thus expressed Gelon was perhaps from his own point of view right. Works of marvellous

splendour were carried out at Athens, when the democracy was attaining to its highest growth; but they were achieved only because all were stirred by a common zeal for a common purpose. It was vain to look for such union at Syracuse, and vain to look for such work as was done at Athens; but yet there were vast enterprises to be taken in hand, for which free citizens would not be the most serviceable instruments. The plans of Gelon made Syracuse a splendid city, which, outgrowing the limits of Ortygia, began to spread over the opposite slopes of Achradina. He had in truth reached a height of power attained by no Greek despot before him. He was virtually master of the eastern half of Sicily, and his army and fleet are described as in point of numbers a match for the army and fleet of Xerxes.

Extent of the power and dominion of Gelon

Four years later, 481 B.C., his aid was sought against this barbarian invader by envoys from Athens and Sparta. These envoys had been rebuffed at Argos: they had been disowned by Thessalians and Boiotians. The Cretans had referred them to an oracle from Delphoi which bade them remember how little they had gained by their efforts to avenge the death of Daidalos and the wrongs and woes of Helen. The men of Korkyra had met them with eager promises of help which they were in no hurry to fulfil. From Gelon they expected promises not less hearty and a performance far more decisive. But in this hope they were to be utterly disappointed. The position and dignity of Syracuse were now scarcely inferior to those of Sparta or of Athens; nor was it strange if Gelon should advance claims which the two chief cities of Eastern Hellas should decline to admit.

Embassy from Athens and Sparta to ask the aid of Gelon against Xerxes, 481 B.C.

This idea is brought out prominently in the tale which relates the interview of the Athenian and Spartan envoys with the Syracusan despot. Telling him that the Persian was close at hand, professedly for the purpose of taking vengeance for the many wrongs done to him by the Athenians, but really with the design of

Offers and demands of Gelon

inslaving all the Greeks, they intreated him in his own interest not less than in theirs to unite hand and heart with them in the great effort to break his power. 'It is vain to think,' they warned him, 'that Xerxes will not come against you, if we are conquered. Take heed betimes. By aiding us you may save yourself; and a good issue commonly follows wise counsel.' The answer of Gelon was a vehement expression of anger; but whether it came unexpectedly or not, we are not told. 'When I sought your aid,' he said, 'against the men of Karchêdon (Carthage), and promised to open to you markets from which you have reaped rich gains, you would do nothing: and as far as lies with you, this country of Sicily would have been under the barbarian to this day. But I have prospered; and now that war threatens you, you begin to remember Gelon. I will not, however, deal with you as you have dealt with me. I will give you two hundred triremes and twenty thousand hoplites, with horsemen and archers, slingers and runners. I will also give corn for all the army of the Greeks so long as the war may last; but I will do this only on condition that I be chieftain and leader of all the Greeks against the barbarians.'

Rejection of the demands of Gelon by the Spartan and Athenian envoys

This demand, it would seem, was more than the Spartan Syagros could bear; and he burst out in a strain of Homeric eloquence. 'In very truth,' he said, 'would Agamemnon, the son of Pelops, mourn, if he were to hear that the Spartans had been robbed of their honour by Gelon and the Syracusans. Dream not that we shall ever yield it to you. If you choose to aid Hellas, do so under the Spartans. If you will not have it so, then stay at home.' But Gelon was at no loss for an answer. 'Spartan friend,' he said, quietly, 'abuse commonly makes a man angry; but I am not going to pay back insults in kind, and thus far I will yield. If you rule by sea, I will rule by land; and if you rule by land, then I must rule on the sea.' It was now the turn of the Athenian to be indignant, and accordingly he broke in with these words: 'King of the Syracusans, the Hellenes have sent us, not

because they want a leader, but because they want an army. Of an army you say little; about the command much. When you asked to lead us all, we left it to the Spartans to speak; but as to ruling on the sea, that we cannot yield. We grudge not to the Spartans their power on land; but we will give place to none on the sea. We have more seamen than all the Greeks. We are of all Greeks the most ancient nation, and we alone have never changed our land; and in the war of which Homer sings our leader was the best of those who came to Ilion to set an army in battle array.' 'Athenians,' answered Gelon, 'you seem likely to have many leaders, but few to be led. But since you will yield nothing and grasp at everything, hasten home and tell the Greeks that the springtime has been taken out of their year.'

Variations in the traditional stories

Such is the tale which Herodotos relates as most generally believed among the continental Greeks about the conduct of Gelon during the Persian war. But the speeches on this conference betray the purpose with which they have been put together. They are mere devices for reconciling the old notions of Spartan supremacy with the rising empire of Athens; and in the effort to uphold the new position claimed by Athens her envoys do not trouble themselves much about either consistency or coherency. They tell Gelon that he had talked at great length about the command and said little about an army. The words were a flat untruth. Gelon had urged his claim to command in about half a dozen words: he had described with minute exactness the forces which he was prepared to furnish, and these would form an admirably complete armament, while he further promised to maintain the whole confederate army during the whole period of the war.

Sicilian version of the story

Herodotos, however, has the candour to tell us that there were other accounts which deprive the popular tradition of all value. Gelon, we are told in one of these stories, sent Kadmos of Kos with a large sum of money to Delphoi. If the Persians gained the victory, he was to present the money to Xerxes as a peace-

offering. If the Greeks should win the victory, he was to bring it back again. The historian tells us that to his great credit Kadmos did bring it back. But this is not all. He confessed there was a Sicilian version which differed from both these accounts. This tradition, he tells us, declared that in spite of the haughty refusal of the Athenians and Spartans to yield or to share the command Gelon would still have aided the eastern Greeks, had not Terillos, the banished tyrant of Himera, brought against him a Carthaginian host equal in number to the Persians who fought under Mardonios at Plataia, and that, therefore, being unable to help them with men, he sent to Delphoi a supply of money for their use.

His refusal, or rather his inability, to furnish an army for resisting Xerxes is thus explained in a way which shows that the eastern Greeks at least had no cause of complaint against him, and which further proves that the supposed conference of the Spartan and Athenian envoys with Gelon is mere fiction. By a series of great efforts Gelon had succeeded in pushing the Carthaginians back to the west of a line drawn between the Greek cities of Himera on the northern and Selinous on the south-western coast of the island; but he had not succeeded in detaching these cities from their friendship for or their alliance with Carthage. Three settlements only remained to the Carthaginians within this line; and although their policy thus far had led them to avoid all wars, the rapidly growing power of Gelon had convinced them that unless they made some special effort they would lose their hold even on this western corner of the island. Their purpose was furthered by those internal feuds and quarrels among the Greeks which rendered the growth of a Greek nation impossible. With moderate combination the Greeks would have been long ago masters of all Sicily. The same cohesion would have secured the same result for the Carthaginians. Both failed alike in the conditions indispensable for national growth; and the end was that both were absorbed in the dominion of imperial Rome.

Carthaginian invasion of Sicily under Hamilkar

Terillos of Himera was expelled in consequence of some advantages gained by the demos of that city over the oligarchic party; but the demos gained nothing by the change. Terillos asked the aid of Carthage, and an army, it is said, of thirty myriads (p. 152) appearing under Hamilkar the son of Hannon took away from Gelon the power, whatever may have been his will, to aid the Greeks in their struggle with Xerxes. If then the Sicilian version be true (and all the evidence at our command confirms it in all its details), it certainly convicts of no little malignity, and that too of a wanton sort, the tradition of the eastern Greeks.

Alleged numbers of the Carthaginians

The great battle in which Gelon broke the power of Carthage was fought at Himera. Of the details of the battle we cannot be said really to know anything. The accounts given are contradictory, one saying that Hamilkar was surprised and slain by some Sicilian troops, the other relating that he was never seen again after the fight, because on finding that the day was going against him he leaped into the fire in which on a huge altar he was sacrificing whole beasts to Moloch. By Herodotos we are told that the Carthaginians raised monuments to his memory in all their colonies as well as in Carthage itself and worshipped him as a god. If there be any truth in this statement, the catastrophe cannot have been so tremendous as Diodoros represents it to have been. The Carthaginians were by no means in the habit of venerating men who brought their country to the verge of ruin.

Battle of Himera

But, in truth, a comparison of this story with that of the invasion of Eastern Hellas by Xerxes shows how the same kind of fiction has moulded both. Both deal in the same enormous numbers; both end with the same humiliation for the invaders. Xerxes reaches the Asiatic shore with one solitary boat; and so too a single vessel makes its way to Carthage with the miserable remnant of the army which Hamilkar had conveyed to Sicily in more than two thousand ships. Gelon

Parallelism of the stories told about the invasions of Hamilkar and Xerxes

is indeed triumphant; and if he does not mercilessly slay all his enemies, it is, we are told, because he was anxious to take part in the continental war against Xerxes. To complete the fiction we are further told that, before he could set sail, the tidings came of the victory of Salamis, and that on receiving the news he summoned an armed assembly of the citizens, and going to that assembly not only without weapons but even without an upper garment, he entered into a minute review of his acts and of his policy, and ended his speech by surrendering his power. Appreciating highly this confidence, or suspecting a trick, the Syracusans hailed him with acclamation as their saviour and their king.

Date of the battle of Himera

The invasion of Hamilkar is placed in the same year with the invasion of Greece by Xerxes. This is probably the truth, or very near the truth: but little reliance can be placed on the more minute coincidences in the story. As the battles of Plataia and Mykalê are assigned to the same day, so the battle of Himera is said to have been fought on the same day with that of Salamis (p. 166). But other versions made it synchronise with the battle in Thermopylai; and we thus see how loose and hollow is the ground on which we are treading.

Supposed connexion between the enterprise of Hamilkar and that of Xerxes

But Herodotos, who notices these coincidences, does not pretend to trace any connexion between the two invasions. The discovery of this connexion seems to have been reserved for Diodoros or for some writer whom Diodoros followed. According to this version the plans of Hamilkar were formed definitely in concert with those of Xerxes. Evidence for this conclusion is wholly lacking; and it has been well said that Carthage was far too independent both in her geographical position and by her power to be determined in her policy either by the wishes of her mother country or by the dictates of the Persian king.

A few months after his great victory at Himera Gelon died of dropsy. His work practically died with him. The sequel of the history of his dynasty is a miserable tale of

faction, feud, and bloodshed. Of his three brothers Hieron was to be despot of Syracuse, while Polyzelos was to have the military command. The latter was compelled to take refuge with the tyrant of Akragas (Agrigentum). A few years later, 467 B.C., Hieron died, and his brother Thrasyboulos, setting aside his nephew, a son of Gelon, revealed his merciless and vindictive disposition. His subjects revolted and besieged him in Ortygia, and, if Diodoros is to be believed, compelled him to surrender his power.

Death of Gelon. 478 B.C.

Only eighteen years had passed since the foundation of the Gelonian dynasty at Syracuse; but the expulsion of the tyrants tended but little to the establishment of order and law. The history of the commotions which followed shows, if it may be trusted, that in spite of all the violence of the time the condition of the country was more than usually healthy and prosperous. A comparison of the Greek colonies in Sicily with those which were established in Africa teaches us that both were largely influenced by the tribes whose lands they occupied, while the universal failings of the Greek character were brought out among them in an exaggerated form. In Sicily these faults produced a wretched harvest of feuds and war; in Africa they led to horrible barbarities over which it is well to draw a veil.

Fall of the Gelonian dynasty, 467 B.C.

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